

What is a Levee?

A levee is a man made structure, usually an earthen embankment, designed and constructed in accordance with sound engineering practices to contain, control or divert the flow of water so as to provide protection from temporary flooding.

Risk Associated with Levees

It is important to understand the risks associated with living behind levees and the steps that can be taken to address these risks. It is also important to note that no levee provides full protection from flooding. Even the best flood control system or structure cannot completely eliminate the risk of flooding. Levees are designed to provide a specific level of protection. A larger flood event can cause them to be overtopped or fail. Levees also decay and deteriorate over time. Regular maintenance and periodic upgrades are needed to ensure that they retain their level of protection and continue to perform to their design. Maintenance can become a serious challenge as a levee system gets older. When levees do fail, they usually fail catastrophically. The damage may be more significant than if the levee was not present.

FEMA and Levees

FEMA is responsible for identifying flood risks in areas behind levees through flood analysis and flood hazard mapping. In addition, FEMA has criteria for recognizing levees as providing protection against the 1% annual chance flooding. However, FEMA does not actually examine or analyze structures to determine their performance during a flooding event. It is the responsibility of the levee owner to show that a levee meets current design and maintenance criteria. If the levee cannot be shown to meet FEMA

standards, the levee will not be mapped as providing adequate protection on the Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) currently in effect. Because the risks associated with levees are real, FEMA strongly recommends flood insurance protection and adherence to evacuation procedures in all areas behind levees.

Decertification of a Levee

FEMA has the responsibility to the public to identify the risks associated with levees that may not have been certified or can no longer be certified. Decertified or uncertified levees will not be depicted on flood maps as providing the required level of protection. The areas behind these levees will be mapped as high risk areas and flood insurance will be required for buildings behind the levee.

What are the Risks with a Levee?

Levees are man made structures, usually an earthen embankment. A levee is built parallel to a body of water to protect the lives and properties behind it. Levees can and do decay over time, making maintenance a serious challenge. Levees can also be overtopped or breached during large floods. But there are constant efforts being made by a variety of organizations to reduce that risk and keep levees operating efficiently.

Where Can I Get More Information?

There are several locations where you

Where Can I Get More Information?

There are several locations where you may be able to find information about a levee located in the City of Parkland:

- Check with local officials to request information about levees in your area. Although the City of Parkland does not own or maintain the levees within their boundaries, the City Building Official can help you with any information you require.
- Check with the United States Army Corps of Engineers. Visit their website at www.usace.army.mil/howdoi/where.html. The USACE will be able to provide information about any Federally owned levees in your area.
- Check FEMA's website at: www.fema.gov/plan/prevent/fhm/lv_intro.shtm

The Most Important Part of Levees

When flood hazard maps identify the area behind a levee as being protected against the 1% annual chance of flooding, the levee is deemed to be accredited. However, an accredited levee does not guarantee protection. FEMA flood maps identifying levees will carry a warning that overtopping or failure of the levee, dike, or other man made structure.



City Commission

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City Of Parkland

Living Behind The
Levees

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