

Region VIII HAZUS Activities Briefing

Technical Assistance: Taking Action on HAZUS

HAZUS (HAZards U.S.) is a computer loss estimation model developed by FEMA that enables users across the nation to gauge the damage that would result from a variety of potential earthquake disaster scenarios. This versatile program is utilized for risk assessment, mitigation planning, and exercises. In addition, as the underlying inventories and methodology improves, HAZUS may be used for disaster response and recovery.

We have performed a Region 8 earthquake risk assessment using HAZUS. HAZUS provides the ability to compare estimated losses by County, as well as evaluate estimated losses per person, which is important in the rural counties of Region 8. Salt Lake County comprises about 40% of the total estimated losses for all Region 8 counties, while potential losses per person in western Wyoming and Montana counties are among the greatest in the U.S.

We are assisting the State of Utah in incorporating detailed building inventory data for the Salt Lake community concurrent with the deployment of a state-of-the-art ground motion monitoring network at the University of Utah. These developments will lead to a more accurate response to a major Wasatch Front earthquake.

Through the Salt Lake HAZUS Data User's Group, we have an active data sharing partnership with Wells Fargo Emergency Management based in Salt Lake.

We participated in launching a pilot course on "Using HAZUS in Mitigation Planning" at EMI. The course supports community based mitigation and demonstrates how the HAZUS can be used to assist states and communities in preparing their enhanced plans under DMA 2000. We have plans to provide this course in Wyoming at the Emergency Management Association of Wyoming (EMAW) annual conference Spring 2002.

When the ability to use HAZUS to evaluate flood losses is available in December 2002, its use in Region 8 is expected to dramatically increase. A pilot study will begin in Spring 2002 to incorporate flood map data from Salt Lake County.

A one-day overview in HAZUS will be held this Fall 2001 at C.U. Denver's GIS lab, with attendance from Colorado and Wyoming, as well as Region 8.

Additional information about the nationwide program is available at <http://www.fema.gov/hazus>