Community Rating System Overview

The Community Rating System (CRS) is a voluntary program that incentivizes communities to implement local mitigation, floodplain management, and outreach activities that surpass the minimum requirements of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The CRS was created to encourage communities to be proactive in reducing flood risk by offering discounts to flood insurance rates.

The three goals of the CRS are to

1. Reduce flood damage to insurable properties
2. Strengthen and support the insurance aspects of the NFIP
3. Encourage a comprehensive approach to floodplain management

What communities can participate in the CRS?

Any community that is enrolled in the NFIP is able to join the CRS. To be enrolled in the NFIP means that residents are eligible to purchase flood insurance from the NFIP. In April 2024, there were more than 1,700 communities in the CRS, which provided discounts to more than 3.3 million policyholders.

Why would a community want to join the CRS?

Communities in the CRS can earn flood insurance premium reductions for property owners. Often this would be getting points for activities already being done by the community.

Your community may already be implementing some CRS activities without receiving the discounts for those activities.

How can a community join the CRS?

A community can join the CRS at any time. It is up to the local officials to request to participate. The prospective community will fill out an application detailing the community's current floodplain management practices and flood mitigation activities.

While it can be beneficial to you to implement mitigation activities for your own properties, individuals themselves can not join the CRS. Only a community can join the CRS. You can contact your local officials to encourage them to consider learning more about the CRS.

What is the process for a community to join the CRS?

1. The local government submits a letter of interest to the FEMA Regional Office, the State NFIP Coordinator, and the CRS Contractor showing the community is implementing activities that would receive at least 500 credit points.
2. FEMA Regional Office must approve the submission.
3. The CRS Contractor does a community verification visit.
4. The contractor submits its findings to FEMA.
5. FEMA notifies the community, state, insurance companies, and other parties.
6. The classification is effective on April 1 or October 1.
7. Each year, the community must recertify that it is performing the activities it is receiving credit for.

What is a CRS class?

The CRS uses a class rating system to assign point values to different floodplain management and mitigation measures. The classes range from 1 to 10 with Class 1 receiving the highest flood insurance premium discount and Class 10 receiving no discount. A community that does not apply for the CRS or does not have the minimum number of credits is a Class 10.

A new benefit is the discount is no longer limited to properties inside the Special Flood Hazard Area, extending insurance reductions to a wider range of residents.

A Louisiana unincorporated parish is 1 of 11 CRS communities receiving a Class 3 designation. They have a 35% flood insurance premium reduction.