

HAZUS User of the Year! 2009 2nd Quarter



Congratulations to Cathy Walker, the 2009 2nd Quarter HAZUS User of the Year. Walker is a GIS analyst at the State of Washington Military Department, Information Technology (IT) Division, Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Section. She has been a HAZUS-MH user and champion for many years and recently assumed leadership of the Washington HAZUS User Group (WAHUG). Her involvement has helped jump-start the WAHUG and brought new excitement and enthusiasm into the group.

Since working with the Washington Emergency Management Division and now for the IT Division of the Washington Military Department, Walker has had the opportunity to conduct HAZUS-MH analysis for both the flood and earthquake hazards. The reports generated from these HAZUS-MH analyses have been used at other state agencies within the state of Washington to determine the risk and vulnerability of buildings considered critical to the operation of these agencies. In addition, Walker has had the opportunity to provide HAZUS-MH analysis in support of the Regional Catastrophic Planning Team efforts currently in progress for the Puget Sound region. Walker has a certificate in GIS and Spatial Modeling from the University of Washington-Tacoma and is pursuing a Master of Science degree in Geographic Information Science from the University of Denver.

Walker conducted outreach for the last year in the state of Washington to those potentially interested in using HAZUS-MH to perform risk analysis and vulnerability assessments as part of their local disaster preparedness planning. Walker has organized these current and potential HAZUS-MH users, created outreach materials, arranged resources at the state level, and conducted meetings to renew interest in expanding the use of HAZUS-MH in the state of Washington. In addition, the increased concern for flooding in western portions of the state has increased the demand for HAZUS-MH risk and vulnerability assessments.

The WAHUG is interested in HAZUS-MH training and collaborations between public and private entities. Walker hopes to participate in the HAZUS-MH Train the Trainer Program in the coming years as a way to meet the needs of the WAHUG. Walker's long-range goals for the WAHUG include bringing speakers and HAZUS-MH experts to WAHUG meetings and continuing to provide technical support to HAZUS-MH users via on-site visits and by telephone. Walker plans to hold WAHUG meetings bi-monthly and looks forward to offering formal and informal training sessions at these meetings.

Cathy Walker's motivation and enthusiasm for HAZUS-MH and her leadership of the Washington HAZUS User Group make her an outstanding HAZUS-MH champion. FEMA is proud to recognize Cathy Walker as the 2009 2nd Quarter HAZUS User of the Year.

Congratulations!



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