

USACE Levee Inspections

This presentation will provide an overview of levee inspection procedures and lessons learned currently being implemented by the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). Under its Levee Safety Program, USACE has created a more comprehensive and rigorous levee inspection procedure to aid USACE district offices in being able to communicate to local levee sponsors and the public the overall condition of the levee system and recommend actions to reduce flood risk. The inspection process includes implementation of a single revised inspection checklist and an automated Levee Inspection System tool that is a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) / Global Positioning System (GPS) based inspection tool that incorporates the levee inspection checklist and links directly with the National Levee Database.

USACE now conducts two types of levee inspections –

- 1) To ensure that the levee system will perform as expected.
- 2) To identify deficiencies or areas which need monitoring or immediate repair.
- 3) To continuously assess the integrity of the levee system in order to identify any changes over time.
- 4) To collect information in order to be able to make informed decisions about future actions.
- 5) To determine eligibility for federal rehabilitation funding for the levee in accordance with PL 84-99.
- 6) To determine if the levee is being properly operated and maintained.
- 7) To determine if the local sponsor is in compliance with the project partnership agreement, if applicable.

The two types of inspections are -

Routine Inspections, also commonly known as annual inspections or continuing eligibility inspections, is a visual inspection conducted to verify that the levee system is being properly operated and maintained. These are conducted on an annual basis.

Periodic Inspections, conducted every 5 years, is the next level of inspection in the USACE Levee Safety Program and is conducted by a multidisciplinary team, led by a professional engineer. It includes a more detailed, comprehensive and consistent evaluation of the condition of the levee system. Activities under the Periodic Inspection include evaluating Routine Inspection items; verifying proper operation and maintenance; evaluating operational adequacy, structural stability and, safety of the system; and comparing current design and construction criteria with those in place when the levee was built. The final Periodic Inspection rating is based upon the Routine Inspection checklist.

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