**Interview Tips for Community Officials About the Updated Flood Maps**

*Below are interview tips for spokespeople to consider when conducting interviews with media:*

* **Be strategic**. Determine your objective and answer every question within that objective. Bridge your response to the questions asked with the answers you’ve planned in advance.
  + With an impending map change, your objectives might be to encourage all residents to understand how they are impacted by the map change and to contact their insurance agent to make sure they have the right coverage at the lowest available rate.
* **Be snappy**. Only a few sentences from your interview will make it into the story, so everything you say should restate or reinforce your message. Keep responses 15-30 seconds long, and include your key messages in every single answer, even if it feels redundant.
* **Key messages**:
  + Flood Maps are changing on [effective date].
  + Find your flood zone on the pending maps by using FEMA Flood Map Changes Viewer (msc.fema.gov/fmcv). (Or refer to your community’s website, if you’ve posted web content about the map changes).
  + The maps will affect flood insurance requirements in some places in our community.
  + Contact your insurance agent as soon as possible for the lowest cost option for your home or business.
  + All residents, regardless of the flood zone they’re in, should consider carrying flood insurance to protect their property.
* **Be human**. Reporters aren’t your audience, their readers or viewers are. Answer questions as if you’re speaking directly to your target audience, and use personal anecdotes or analogies.
* **Be resourceful**. Use the key messages and templates provided to help mainstream your efforts and keep your messaging consistent.
* **Don't go into the weeds**. Know what level of detail to provide a reporter. Don’t try to educate the reporter about every single issue; it leads to confusion, distracts from your core messaging, and can back you into a corner.
* **Don't speak in jargon**. Adjust your vocabulary to the technical level of the interviewers and their readers or viewers. If you use phrases or terms that aren’t common, you’ll decrease the chances of an accurate story.