

URBAN STORMWATER MANAGEMENT STUDY

Michael D. Talbott, P.E., Director

Harris County Flood Control District, Houston, Texas

Flooding is this region's natural disaster. Tremendous progress has been made to reduce the risk of natural and significant flooding through extensive projects, as well as general drainage features. However, a lot more remains to be done, and done in a manner that has appropriate regard for community and natural values.

With the devastation of Tropical Storm Allison, there is a heightened public awareness of flooding and a renewed sense of urgency. There is also a perception expressed by some that "flooding is getting worse" due to land development, and that flooding can be "fixed."

With advances in technology and extensive rainfall and stream gage records, along with public interest in the subject, an opportunity exists to improve the understanding of issues related to rainfall/runoff and development/mitigation through a study effort. The study effort must successfully integrate input from the community, technical professionals, academia, and government.

Goals of the study effort include:

1. The study will be an objective and open process to examine the issues, and to confirm and/or recommend updates to public project and land development policy, regulation and design criteria.
2. The study will lead to a better understanding of flooding and drainage issues, better stormwater management, consistency among regulatory agencies, better public projects, and increased public confidence.