

Natomas homeowners may buy low-cost flood insurance until Jan. 6

mglover@sacbee.com

PUBLISHED THURSDAY, DEC. 03, 2009

The Federal Emergency Management Agency has amended its flood insurance guidelines to allow homeowners in the Natomas basin to renew more affordable preferred risk policy plans through Jan. 6, Sacramento Democratic U.S. Rep. Doris Matsui announced today.

Matsui's office said the congresswoman contacted FEMA after constituents called her with concerns that they would not be able to renew their flood insurance policies at the preferred rate.

Preferred risk policies have an annual cost of about \$300 a year, compared with \$1,200 to \$1,300 for standard flood insurance, according to Matsui's office.

"We wanted to make sure that people who were told they were going to get this did get it," said Matsui spokeswoman Mara Lee.

Last year, the federal government placed the Natomas basin in a new flood hazard zone, a move prompted by concern over the condition of the community's levees.

About 26,000 affected residents were required to purchase flood insurance, and preferred risk policies had to be purchased prior to a Dec. 8, 2008, deadline. At Matsui's urging, FEMA then extended availability for another year, meaning that those who purchased policies by last year's deadline would be able to renew at the affordable rate prior to Dec. 8 this year