

Flood Insurance and Flood Maps



ABOUT FLOOD HAZARD MAPS

Flood hazard maps are used to identify a property's flood risk. When considering the purchase or renewal of a flood insurance policy, consumers will need to know whether their property is in a moderate-to-low risk or high-risk area in order to determine which policy is right for them.

Over the years, many of the U.S. government's flood hazard maps have become outdated due to urban growth, changes in river flows and coastlines and even flood mitigation efforts like drainage systems and levees. Accurate flood risk information is essential to inform property owners of changing flood risks and to determine appropriate rates for flood insurance coverage.

Risk MAP is the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA's) response to the need to update and maintain flood hazard maps by creating new Digital Flood Insurance Rate Maps (DFIRMs) for communities across the United States. In addition, the DFIRMs result in flood maps that are more accurate, easier to use and readily available online to residents.

RISK LEVEL	FLOOD HAZARD ZONE
High Flood Risk	<p>AE, A, AH, AR, A99 or AO Zone. These properties have a one percent chance of flooding in any year — and are more than twice as likely to be damaged by a flood as by fire.</p> <p>VE or V Zone. These properties have a one percent chance of flooding in any year and also face hazards associated with coastal storm waves.</p> <p>Insurance note: Flood insurance is mandatory in high-risk areas for most mortgages that are secured by loans from federally regulated or insured lenders.</p>
Moderate-to-Low Flood Risk	<p>Shaded X Zone. These properties are in moderate-to-low risk areas. The risk is reduced in these areas but not removed.</p> <p>X Zone. These properties are in an area of overall lower risk.</p> <p>Insurance note: Lower cost, Preferred Risk Policies are often an option in these areas, starting at \$129 per year. Flood insurance coverage is not mandated in X zones, but is recommended, as the risk for flood is still very real. Keep in mind that while your property could be designated as moderate-to-low risk, it may still be geographically close to a Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA).</p>



IF MAPS SHOW...	THESE REQUIREMENTS, OPTIONS AND SAVINGS APPLY
<p>Change from Moderate-to-Low Flood Risk to High Risk</p>	<p>Flood insurance is mandatory. Flood insurance will be federally required for most mortgage holders. Insurance costs may rise to reflect the true nature of the flood risk. As with all types of insurance, when the chance of loss increases, so does the cost of insurance. Higher policy deductibles are one option for lowering insurance premiums. Your flood insurance agent can provide you with value information on ways to save.</p> <p>Grandfathering offers savings. The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) has “grandfathering” rules to recognize policyholders who have built in compliance with the flood map or who maintain continuous coverage. An insurance agent can provide more details on how to save.</p>
<p>Change from High Flood Risk to Moderate-to-Low Risk</p>	<p>Flood insurance is optional but recommended. The risk has only been reduced, not removed. Flood insurance can still be obtained at lower rates.</p> <p>Conversion offers savings. An existing policy can be converted to a lower cost Preferred Risk Policy.</p>
<p>No Change in Risk Level</p>	<p>No change in insurance rates. Property owners should talk to their insurance agent to learn their specific risk and take steps to protect their property and assets.</p>

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- For more information about the NFIP or the FloodSmart campaign, visit FloodSmart.gov.
- For more information about each of the different flood hazard zone designations, visit http://www.fema.gov/plan/prevent/floodplain/nfipkeywords/flood_zones.shtm.
- To view and download the NFIP Flood Insurance Manual, visit <http://www.fema.gov/business/nfip/manual.shtm>.
- To learn more about Risk MAP, visit <http://www.fema.gov/plan/ffmm.shtm>.
- You may also visit the Map Service Center at msc.fema.gov to read more about flood mapping or to find a flood hazard map covering your area, or call the FEMA Map Assistance Center toll-free at 1-877-FEMA-MAP (1-877-336-2627).