



Get the Facts!

...about Flood Insurance

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is remapping the floodplains of Travis County to identify the risks associated with heavy rains in the Austin-Hill Country region. The Travis County project is part of the agency's nationwide effort to revise the maps that predict where floods are likely to occur. Local governments rely on the maps to manage development that may affect – and be affected by – flooding. The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) uses the maps for flood insurance purposes.

If my insurance premiums go up, who will pay for that increase?

Flood insurance is the responsibility of the property owner. If you purchase flood insurance before the new FEMA maps are finalized, you may receive a premium based on the current map rather than the new map that may result in significant savings. For more information contact your insurance agent.

My property is not currently mapped in the high-risk (100-year) flood plain, but it will be on the new map. Do I need flood insurance?

Your lender might require that you purchase flood insurance. However, even if you are not required to buy flood insurance, TCRFC strongly encourages all Lake Travis property owners to have a flood policy. Contact your insurance agent for more information.

My property was built before floodplain maps even existed. What does this new understanding of flood risk mean to me?

Your structure is considered to be Pre-FIRM. Historically, the risk of flooding for these structures has been significantly higher.

- If your first finished floor is 722 feet or lower and you do not currently have flood insurance, then your lender may require that you obtain flood insurance.



- If your policy is obtained prior to the effective date of the map change, then you will be eligible for rating based on the prior zone and base flood elevation as long as *continuous coverage is maintained*. The policy can be assigned to a new owner.
- If coverage lapses at any time after the effective date of the map change, then the rating will be based on the new zone and elevation. *There can be a significant difference between premiums based on current elevations and premiums based on a 6-foot higher flood elevation.*

My property was built after floodplains were mapped and my elevation certificate shows first finished floor of 717 feet. What does this new understanding of flood risk mean to me?

Your structure is considered to be Post-FIRM. Your structure complied with elevation requirements at the time it was built, so it will *continue to* be eligible for rating based on the zone and elevation of the current map with the 716-foot base flood elevation until the structure is substantially damaged or improved, *provided that proof is submitted to the insurance company*. This proof must include the community's flood map at the time the structure was built, elevation certificate and building permit materials confirming the dates of construction. This documentation is not always easy to obtain, so it may be easier to obtain flood insurance prior to the map change and maintain continuous coverage.

The most flood coverage I can obtain through the NFIP is \$250,000 of coverage, not enough to cover the cost of rebuilding my home. How can I get the additional flood insurance I need?

Supplemental flood coverage is available through some private insurance companies and is not subsidized by the federal government. Companies set their own rates for this excess flood coverage. Contact your insurance agent for more information.

I want to build my dream home on an undeveloped waterfront parcel. We plan to set our foundation top to 718 feet, well above the current floodplain. I already have my building permit, so why should I build higher if I do not have to?

Studies indicate that the depth of the base flood in the floodplain is actually six feet higher than previously believed, so your dream home would be under four feet of water in a 1-percent-chance flood. Consider that you will have a 26-percent chance of a 100-year flood during the life of your 30-year loan, and an even higher chance of damage from a lesser flood. Statistically, your home is more likely to experience a flood than a fire.

Besides, four feet of water would likely substantially damage your home, so you would have to rebuild it in compliance with the new floodplain anyway. Why put your dream home in harm's way?



More questions?

Call the Travis County Flood Map Project hotline toll-free, 1-877-425-3389. You may also contact project consultants Mike Moya or Lynn Lovell at Halff Associates, Inc., (817) 847-1422, or by e-mail at mmoya@halff.com or llovell@halff.com. The project Web site is www.halff-femastudy.com, where additional information can be found, including the project schedule, meetings and contacts regarding local development standards.

Contact the FEMA Region VI office at (940) 898-5127 or the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) at (281) 829-6880. Information about the NFIP also is available at www.floodsmart.gov.