



FEMA



Hurricane Sandy Advisory Base Flood Elevations (ABFEs) in Rockland County, New York

As communities continue to recover from the devastating effects of Hurricane Sandy, it is important to recognize lessons that are being learned and to employ mitigation actions that ensure structures are rebuilt stronger, safer, and less vulnerable in the face of future flooding events.

A county-wide flood hazard study to better characterize flood risk for non-coastal, riverine areas of Rockland County was already underway at the time Hurricane Sandy occurred in October 2012. This study did not include an updated storm surge analysis for the Hudson River, although the current effective riverine flooding analysis for the river was updated by incorporating more precise ground elevation data than that used in the previous study.

The Preliminary Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) along with the draft Flood Insurance Study (FIS) were issued on March 31, 2011. Concurrently, and before the impacts of Hurricane Sandy were felt, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), as administrator of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), began a restudy of coastal flooding in a number of areas of New York, including the Hudson River. However, project funding at that time only allowed for full development of updated storm surge information for the eastern bank of the Hudson River in Westchester County.

After Hurricane Sandy, Rockland County officials requested that FEMA prepare Advisory Base Flood Elevation (ABFE) maps so that communities could make sound decisions about rebuilding.

Communities are strongly encouraged to use ABFE information to rebuild stronger, safer, and with reduced vulnerability to future flooding events.

Available Resources

For information about Hurricane Sandy Recovery, visit:
<http://www.fema.gov/hurricane-sandy>

For additional information on Advisory Base Flood Elevations, visit FEMA Region II's Coastal Website, visit:
<http://www.region2coastal.com/>

To ask questions and get information about flood insurance and general information about Advisory Base Flood Elevations, call the National Flood Insurance Program Help Center at 1-800-427-4661 or contact us through the [online form](#) on the Region2Coastal site

To learn how to build safer and stronger and potentially decrease your flood insurance premiums download the FEMA Building Science Resources to Assist with Reconstruction After Hurricane Sandy factsheet by visiting <http://www.fema.gov/library/viewRecord.do?id=6651>

To see if you are eligible for Hazard Mitigation grants and loans, visit: <http://www.fema.gov/hazard-mitigation-assistance>

To learn more about the National Flood Insurance Program or find an insurance agent, visit: <http://www.floodsmart.gov/floodsmart/> or call 1-888-229-0437

For technical assistance on local ABFE adoption, call (518) 402-8185, or email floodpln@gw.dec.state.ny.us

For information about local building code and permit requirements, contact your community officials

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The ABFEs are based on sound science and engineering, and are derived from more recent data and improved study methodologies compared to existing FIRMs. In many cases, the ABFEs reflect a higher one-percent-annual-chance flood elevation than the current effective and preliminary FIRMs. Property and business owners should consult with their local building official to fully understand how ABFE information can be used to support rebuilding efforts.

Communities participating in the NFIP's Community Rating System can receive credit for adopting standards higher than NFIP minimum requirements, resulting in premium discounts for policyholders in high-risk areas. The Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 calls for the NFIP to eliminate flood insurance subsidies and discounts and to increase rates to reflect actual flood risk. These provisions may have a significant future impact on rates for properties not compliant with NFIP requirements, and properties that are not compliant with future base flood elevations will see significant premium increases.

Geospatial data layers and maps for Rockland County are now available on FEMA Region II's Coastal Website, <http://www.Region2Coastal.com>. This information is accompanied with guidance to inform Federal, state, and local officials and to assist them in making informed decisions about rebuilding.

In addition, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) Floodplain Management Section will work with Rockland communities to provide technical assistance for local ABFE adoption. Community officials can call (518) 402-8185, or email floodpln@gw.dec.state.ny.us with questions or requests for assistance.

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