

BUREAU OF ENGINEERING
Department of Public Works
City of Los Angeles
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CITY OF LOS ANGELES
NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE PROGRAM
Repetitive Loss Property Newsletter
2013-2014

As a covered entity under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the City of Los Angeles does not discriminate on the basis of disability and, upon request, will provide reasonable accommodation to ensure equal access to its programs, services and ac-

Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act

The authority of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) has been extended for 5 years until September 30, 2017. This reform act removes subsidized rates (pre-FIRM rates) for a variety of classes of structures and allows rates to increase by 25% per year until actual rates are achieved. The effective date is July 1, 2012.

- Any residential property that is not the primary residence
- Any property that has incurred flood related damages that cumulatively exceed the fair market value of the property
- Any business property
- Any property that after the date of the Bill has incurred substantial damage or has experienced "substantial improvement exceeding 30 percent of the fair market value of the property.
- Any new policy or lapsed policy, or any policy for a newly purchased property.
- Any policy for which the owner has refused a FEMA mitigation offer under HMGP, or for a repetitive loss property or severe repetitive loss property.

For additional changes including mapping, mitigation programs, levees, flood in progress determinations, studies, building code enforcement please see:

http://www.floods.org/ace-files/documentlibrary/2012_NFIP_Reform/2012_NFIP_Reform_Act_ASFPM_Summary_of_Contents.pdf

2012 Floodplain Management Plan (FMP) Progress Report

The City of Los Angeles joined the **National Flood Insurance Program** in 1980 and made federally-backed flood insurance available to all City residents. Since October 2005, the City has received a class 7 rating under Community Rating System (CRS) which means the residents within FEMA designated **Special Flood Hazard Areas** (SFHA) receive a 15% flood insurance premium discount and others in the City, outside the SFHA, receive a 5% discount.

In order to maintain the current class 7 rating, the City is required to prepare an FMP which includes an annual progress report and an update every 5 to 10 years. The first FMP was completed in 2001 and in April of 2010, the City Council adopted the latest FMP update including the RLP Analysis. Currently, the City has completed and adopted the 2012 FMP Progress Report which is posted online at:

Dear resident / property owner:

This mailer is sent to you as a **reminder** that according to the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) records your property is **either** considered a Repetitive Loss Property (RLP) **or** your property is exposed to a high flood hazard by being nearby a neighbor that is on the RLP list. RLP is a property that has filed a minimum of two flood damage claims of more than a \$1000 each during a 10-year period.

If you have recently moved into this home, then you need to know the flood risks associated with this property in order to take precautions and protect your interests. Please remember that until the flood hazard is clearly identified and resolved, it is prudent to maintain a flood insurance policy in force to protect you against flood losses. **Homeowner's insurance policies do not cover damage from floods.** If you don't have flood insurance, please talk to your insurance agent.

The City offers various services available to you free of charge that can help you minimize flood hazards. The phone numbers where you can request these services are listed at the end of this mailer.

If you have questions regarding this publication, you may call the Bureau of Engineering - National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) section at **(213) 485-4820** or e-mail at ENG.NFIP@lacity.org.

Note: According to the City of Los Angeles Ordinance No. 172081, it is mandatory that sellers, lessors or renters give written notice to all prospective and interested parties including, but not limited to purchasers, lessees and renters, prior to finalization of such a transaction when the subject land and/or structures are located in Special Flood Hazard Areas. Failure to give such notice shall be the basis for rescinding any sale, lease or rental agreement.

How to remove your property from the Repetitive Loss Property (RLP) list.

To remove your property from the RLP list please call us at **(213) 485-4820** to set up an appointment for inspection. One of our engineers will be glad to investigate and provide assistance.

Once a property is removed from the RLP list, property owners will have fewer restrictions when obtaining building permit applications and may lower flood insurance premiums.

FEMA National Flood Insurance Program phone numbers

General Information.....**(800) 427-4661**
Need a Flood Insurance Agent?.....**(800) 720-1093**

All other questions

Please call **3-1-1**

The Benefits Of Flood Insurance Versus Disaster Assistance

Flood Insurance

- You are in control. Flood insurance claims are paid even if a disaster is not declared by the President.
- Between 20 and 25 percent of all claims paid by the NFIP are outside of Special Flood Hazard Areas.
- There is no payback requirement.
- Flood insurance policies are continuous, and are not non-renewed or cancelled for repeat losses.
- Flood insurance reimburses you for all covered building losses up to \$250,000 and \$500,000 for businesses. Contents coverage is also available up to \$100,000 for homeowners and \$500,000 for businesses.
- The average cost of a flood insurance policy is a little more than \$500 annually. The cost of a preferred risk policy is less than \$200 annually, depending on where you live.

Disaster Assistance

- Most forms of federal disaster assistance require a presidential declaration.
- Federal disaster assistance declarations are not awarded in all flooding incidents.
- The most typical form of disaster assistance is a loan that must be repaid with interest.
- The duration of a Small Business Administration (SBA) disaster home loan could extend to 30 years.
- The average Individuals and Households Program award for presidential disaster declarations related to flooding in 2008 was less than \$4,000.
- Repayment on a \$50,000 SBA disaster home loan is \$240 a month or \$2,880 annually at 4% interest.

Note: When obtaining a new flood insurance policy, please be aware that there is a 30-day waiting period before the policy becomes effective.

CITY SERVICES AND PHONE LIST

2013-2014

Free Flood Information: The City of Los Angeles provides free flood zone information. Copies of the Federal Emergency Management Agency Flood Insurance Rate Maps are available for review in all Bureau of Engineering district offices. You can also access a copy through internet at:

<http://msc.fema.gov>

For flood zone information and availability of elevation certificates, call us at :

(213) 485-4820 (Call back time is within 2 business days)

This information is also available to you directly through the internet at:

<http://navigatela.lacity.org>

Investigation of Drainage Deficiencies: Request a drainage investigation when the water in the streets overtops the curb by calling your local Bureau of Engineering District office:

Harbor District.....**(310) 732-4690**

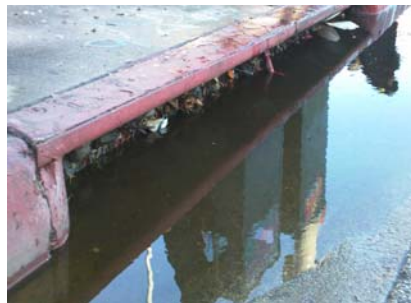
West L. A.**(310) 575-8617**

Valley District.....**(818) 374-4643**

Central District.....**(213) 485-1604**

Espanol.....**(213) 485-4513**

If requested, the Bureau of Engineering staff will visit your property to review your flood problem and recommend measures to stop flooding or prevent flood damage. Call the City's Bureau of Engineering at **(213) 485-4820**. These services are free.



Clogged Catch Basins: Report clogged catch basins to the City Hot Line **(800) 974-9794** between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday through Friday, or **(213) 485-7575** after 4 p.m. and on week-ends.

Illegal Dumping: If you need to report incidents of illegal dumping call the City Hot Line **(800) 974-9794**.

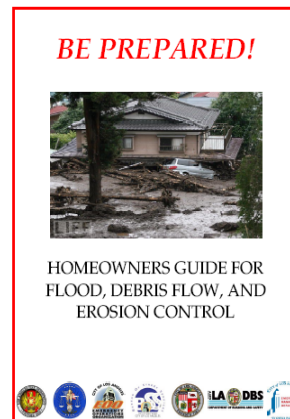
Before you build in the floodplain: All new development and construction in the floodplain is regulated and requires a special review before a building permit is issued. Contact the Bureau of Engineering at **(213) 485-4820** during the planning stages to inquire about the regulations applicable to your project. **Suspected illegal floodplain development can be reported at the same number.**

Hillside Problems: Report problems with hillsides as well as temporary erosion caused by construction projects, and alteration or modifications to natural drainage that affect your property to the Building and Safety Call Center at:

(888) 524-2845 or 3-1-1

You can download the brochure "**Be Prepared: Homeowner's Guide for Flood, Debris, and Erosion Control**" published by the City of Los Angeles, Department of Building and Safety at the web site below, or call to request a copy at: **3-1-1**

http://ladbs.org/LADBSWeb/LADBS_Forms/Publications/floodmit.pdf



Flood protection library: Additional information regarding flood protection, floodplain management and the NFIP can be found through the FEMA web site at:

<http://www.fema.gov>

or at the City's Central Library (*Science, Technology and Patents Department*) at:

<http://www.lapl.org/branches/central-library/departments/science-technology-patents>

Sand Bags

Free sand and sandbags are offered through the Fire Stations and the Bureau of Street Services yards during the storm season. A complete list of maintenance yards and local fire stations offering sand bags is available on line at the following web site (or call **311** to request a copy of this list).



<http://bss.lacity.org/resurfacing/storm.htm>

Typical Flood Problems

Hillside Drainage Problem

This occurs on properties located at the bottoms of steep hills. Floods happen when the drainage system is deficient or inadequately designed. Runoff is not diverted to the street but enters the home or garage. In some situations, neighbors change the normal drainage patterns, creating flood risks to other properties. Mudslides from slope failures are also common problems. If erosion on your property is a problem or if others have changed the normal drainage patterns, you can call to request an investigation, or information on how to protect your home. Sandbags are provided free during the rainy season (please refer to the City Services Phone List provided).

Street Drainage Problem

Flooding may occur when street runoff enters private property. If the property is located on a street sump area (lowest point of the nearby streets), or if the building pads on these properties are lower than the street level, and/or the driveway is sloped toward the house and garage, the street flow can pond. Drainage problems can be caused by undersized or broken City storm drains, or clogged City catch basins. If this problem applies to you, you can call the Bureau of Engineering to request a drainage investigation, and the Bureau of Sanitation to request that the catch basins be cleaned or obstructions removed from City drains.

On-Site Drainage Problem

When private drain inlets or v-ditches are inadequate or become plugged with yard debris, water ponds within the property and cannot drain to the street. Underground garages with insufficient drainage are also commonly flooded.

Other Hazards

These properties have site specific problems that need special and individual attention.

- Buildings damaged by coastal flooding exacerbated by a storm drain failure;
- Catastrophic rains far exceeding drain capacity;
- Buildings built too low into the bed of a natural watercourse; Groundwater seepage enters the lower level of the house, flooding the basement after heavy storms.

How can you prepare your property from the flood

- Know how to shut off the gas and electricity to your house when a flood comes.
- Make a list of emergency numbers and identify a safe place to go to. Create a household inventory, especially of basement contents.
- Put insurance policies, valuable papers, medicine, etc. in a safe place.
- Collect and put cleaning supplies, camera, waterproof boots, etc. in a handy place.
- Mark your fuse or breaker box to show the circuits to floodable areas on your property. Turning off power to the basement can reduce property damage and save lives.
- Check your building for water entry points. These can be basement windows, the basement stairwell, doors, and dryer vents. These can be protected by low walls or temporary shields.
- Install a floor drain plug, standpipe, overhead sewer backup valve to prevent sewer backup flooding.

Flood Prevention Tips

- Keep drainage areas (ditches, swales, small channels) free of debris.
- Consult an engineer to design a permanent water/flood debris control device, if needed.
- Ensure that drainage pipes within your property are cleared and work properly.
- Landscape slope areas with plants suitable for fire retardant and erosion control.
- Report clogged catch basins to request cleaning and floodwaters overtopping the curb for engineering investigations.

Personal Safety During a Flood

- Do not walk through flowing water.
- Do not drive through a flooded area.
- Stay away from power lines and electrical wires.
- If flooded, have your electricity turned off by the Department of Water and Power.
- Look out for animals, especially snakes.
- Be alert for gas leaks.