

# FEMA preparing to introduce a new Flood Insurance Rate Map.

## WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

- ◆ Premiums are increasing every year as the subsidized insurance rates are being phased away
- ◆ Having an Elevation Certificate will allow you to know exactly where your home is situated to compare to the FIRM. This information can be used by your insurance agent to provide you the best rate on flood insurance.
- ◆ To see what the projected changes to FEMA flood insurance rate map (FIRM) are check the best available data available at [www.columbiapa.org/resiliency](http://www.columbiapa.org/resiliency)

SEDA-Council of Governments (SEDA-COG) has negotiated a group price for engineering/survey services to complete and issue FEMA Elevation Certificates to interested homeowners. This program is slated to end in April.

Questions should be addressed to Teri Provost at 1-800-332-6701, [tprovost@seda-cog.org](mailto:tprovost@seda-cog.org).

SEDA-Council of Governments (SEDA-COG), in cooperation with Pennsylvania Representative David Millard, has negotiated a group price for engineering/survey services to complete and issue FEMA Elevation Certificates for interested homeowners in the Town of Bloomsburg who reside within the 100-year floodplain (Zone AE). The cost is \$450.00, prepaid to SEDA-COG. There are no income restrictions applied to this program.

The National Flood Insurance Program has gone through significant changes with the 2012 Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act and the 2014 Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act. These reforms mean that policy holders with subsidized pre-FIRM or grandfathered rates may see premium rate increases until FEMA deems that the flood insurance cost is based on the true flood risk to that property.

- ◆ An elevation certificate determines the true flood risk and can often reduce the cost of your flood insurance by determining the proper flood insurance premium rate for the building, allowing an insurance company to better assess the risk (your home) being insured.

# What Will Your Flood Risk Cost?

Your Discounted Rate Is Being Phased Out. Learn More.

**Your situation (LETTER A):** An updated flood map shows your property is at high risk for flooding. You can expect your discounted rate to increase by approximately 15, not to exceed 18 percent a year. You may eventually need an Elevation Certificate, but having one probably won't be financially beneficial for most policyholders until quite a few years from now. Know your options.

## Option 1 Do Nothing

Your discounted rate will increase by up to 18 percent each year.



## Option 2 Get an Elevation Certificate

There's no way to know exactly when having an Elevation Certificate will be beneficial, but [www.FEMA.gov/cost-of-flood](http://www.FEMA.gov/cost-of-flood) provides some guidance. Keep in mind without an Elevation Certificate there's no way to predict when these large increases will stop.



### How to Get an Elevation Certificate

An Elevation Certificate verifies the elevation of your building. Before you take any action to get an EC, check with your insurance agent or company to see if there is already one on file. If not, you can hire a licensed surveyor to provide one.



### See Your Agent for Your Rate.

Knowing this, you'll know you're getting the best protection at the rate which fits your risk.

### Keep Your Policy in Force.

If you ever allow your flood insurance policy to lapse for either more than 90 days, or have for any number of days, you may be required to provide an Elevation Certificate, and you will no longer be eligible for the discounted rate you have been receiving.

Contact your agent for more information or visit [www.FEMA.gov/cost-of-flood](http://www.FEMA.gov/cost-of-flood).



FEMA



# Direct Letters give NFIP Policyholders more Information

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) began sending letters to policyholders of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).

The distribution of these letters—known informally as “clear communication letters”—is part of FEMA’s implementation of Section 28 of the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act of 2014. **The Act requires FEMA to clearly communicate current flood risk to policyholders.**

To do this, FEMA first required NFIP policies to be updated with current flood map and risk information. Based on that information and how the policy is rated, FEMA is sending out **seven different letters** to policyholders, including those in CRS communities. The seven categories are:

- NFIP policyholders whose buildings have been newly mapped into a high-risk flood area fall into **category A**.
- NFIP policyholders who pay a standard rate based on a flood zone of moderate to low risk for flooding fall into **category B**.
- Those who hold NFIP policies on buildings in high-risk flood areas but whose rates are grandfathered make up **category C**.
- NFIP policyholders who have a primary residence that is located in a high-risk flood area but was built before the community adopted its first flood map, and thus are paying a discounted rate, are **category D**.
- Those with an NFIP-insured property that was constructed before the community adopted its first flood map—whether non-primary residence, severe repetitive loss property, substantially improved/damaged building, or a business—fall into **category E**. These policyholders are paying a discounted rate for a building in a high-risk flood area.
- NFIP policyholders with Preferred Risk Policies—for buildings that have an acceptable flood loss history and are located in areas at moderate to low flood risk—fall into **category F**.
- NFIP policyholders whose premium reflects the true flood risk of the building are **category G**.

Insurance agents and policyholders can **find out more information about the letters** and the rating review process **at this link on FEMA’s website: <https://www.fema.gov/cost-flood-policyholders>**.

In the letters, FEMA suggests that policyholders contact their insurance agents to discuss their individual circumstances. For some categories, the letter is accompanied by a flyer [*see above*] that **shows different rating options and how to get more information.**

“These letters provide FEMA an opportunity to clearly communicate to NFIP policyholders what their current flood risk is and how their policy is rated, and also give information about what their options may be,” Hintermister said. “I encourage policyholders to talk to their insurance agent about their policy regularly.”

**This message is part of the Town’s Flood Task Force program for community outreach. Get informed on how flooding in Bloomsburg can effect you. Check out the flood information available on the Town website [www.bloomsburgpa.org](http://www.bloomsburgpa.org)**