

What does community participation in the National Flood Insurance Program mean and how does that affect a homeowner?

Communities, i.e., local governments, decide to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Specifically, communities that agree to manage flood hazard areas by adopting minimum regulatory standards may participate in the NFIP. These standards are listed in Section 60.3 of the [NFIP regulations](#).

If a community does not participate in the program, property owners in that jurisdiction are not able to purchase federally backed flood insurance. Also, federal grants, loans, disaster assistance, and Federal mortgage insurance are unavailable for the acquisition or construction of structures located in the floodplain as shown on the NFIP maps.

Similarly, if a community does not participate in the program, property owners are not subject to federal requirements of mandatory flood insurance. However, a lender is still required to inspect any flood maps to determine flood hazard risk and provide notice of such risk. A lender may require a borrower to obtain flood insurance even in the absence of a federally mandatory requirement.

What is a Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM)?

A Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) is an insurance and floodplain management map issued by FEMA that identifies areas of 1-percent annual chance flood hazard in a community. In some areas, the map also shows Base Flood Elevations and 0.2-percent annual chance floodplain boundaries and, occasionally, regulatory floodway boundaries.

What is a Base Flood Elevation (BFE)?

A Base Flood Elevation (BFE) is the height of the base flood, usually in feet, in relation to the National Geodetic Vertical Datum of 1929, the North American Vertical Datum of 1988, or other datum referenced in the Flood Insurance Study report, or average depth of the base flood, usually in feet, above the ground surface.

What is a Flood Insurance Study (FIS)?

A Flood Insurance Study (FIS) is a book that contains information regarding flooding in a community and is developed in conjunction with the Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM). The FIS, also known as a flood elevation study, frequently contains a narrative of the flood history of a community and discusses the engineering methods used to develop the FIRMs. The study also contains flood profiles for studied flooding sources and can be used to determine Base Flood Elevations for some areas.



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