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## Rebuilding Faster, Stronger, and More Resilient

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*"It is absolutely critical that we take this opportunity to rebuild New Jersey smarter and stronger in the aftermath of Sandy. That's why today I am approving emergency regulations being proposed by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to help fast-track the rebuilding process. By doing so, we're helping residents and businesses who have endured so much, to get back on their feet while at the same time ensuring that rebuilding occurs as quickly as possible, without costly red tape slowing this process down for our families and small businesses. As New Jersey recovers from Sandy, utilizing the best available data provided in these FEMA maps will give our communities the ability to rebuild with the least possible risk from future storms moving forward."*

- Governor Chris Christie, Remarks On Emergency Flood , 11/13/12

### Emergency Regulations To Rebuild Faster, Stronger And Safer:

Taking action to give New Jersey families, businesses and local governments the best available guidance to quickly and more durably rebuild from Super Storm Sandy, Governor Christie signed emergency regulations to adopt FEMA's updated Advisory Base Flood Elevation maps as the uniform rebuilding standard for the entire state. Using the best available science and data will give families, businesses, and communities the best assessment of their risk - allowing them to better mitigate damage from future flood events, avoid higher flood insurance costs, and begin the rebuilding process immediately.

Common-sense provisions for rebuilding stronger structures, more quickly:

**Adopts Advisory Base Elevation Maps:** Adopts the height and construction requirements in FEMA's Advisory Base Flood Elevation (ABFE) maps as a state standard for reconstruction. The ABFEs reflect the best available, most current scientific data about 100-year floods.

**Permits by Rule:** Allows property owners who rebuild to the ABFEs (plus one additional foot, as has been required by the New Jersey Flood Hazard Area Control Act since 2007) to do so via Permit By Rule (PBR). This eliminates the need for thousands of property owners to apply for permits, saving them at least \$500 in permit fees plus the design and engineering costs associated with an application, and allowing them to begin reconstruction without waiting for review.

**Wet Flood Proofing:** Allows "wet floodproofing" for non-residential buildings. Wet floodproofing means that a building may flood but will structurally withstand the water, and enables reconstruction in urban areas in a safe and less costly manner than requiring elevations or dry floodproofing.

**Foundation Requirements:** Eliminates requirements that now allow certain building foundations to have only three walls -a potentially unsafe construction method.

In each of the last eight years, New Jersey has experienced at least one major disaster declaration from FEMA resulting in millions of dollars of flood damage. In 2011 alone, FEMA made five major disaster declarations in the State, four of which were due to flooding from severe weather events.

### Updated Preliminary Flood Maps Will Better Inform The Rebuilding Process:

Nearly two years ago, FEMA commenced a review and updating process for the state's Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs). These regulatory maps, which anticipate the risk to communities and structures from the 1 % annual chance of flooding, had not been updated in more than 20 to 30 years. While the remapping process is ongoing and was not originally due to be released until the summer of 2013, the Christie Administration and FEMA believe that the impact of Superstorm Sandy has made it critical to share these preliminary *Advisory* Base Flood Elevations (ABFEs) since many New Jerseyans are faced with critical decision points right now.

Decisions about how, where and whether to rebuild are being made every day and it is important to provide people with the best and most up-to-date information available so that they can make informed judgments. Individuals need this data before they began to rebuild their homes and any delay would deny homeowners and small businesses information necessary to their future.

Having better information to guide the recovery process is a critical component to rebuilding stronger, safer and more resilient communities.

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ABFEs were successfully used in rebuilding efforts after Hurricane Katrina. Many communities in Louisiana and Mississippi adopted ABFEs, which led home and business owners to rebuild higher and safer, and in some cases resulted in flood insurance premium discounts for policy holders in high-risk areas.

**Equipping New Jerseyans To Make The Best Decisions For Their Families Now:**

As New Jersey residents begin to make decisions about rebuilding, it is critical for individual homeowners and businesses to have accurate information about the risk they face from future storms, as well as what standards are likely to be put in place so they can make the most informed decisions about how best to rebuild.

While the initial cost to rebuild at a new elevation may be higher, homeowners will likely have a flood insurance premium that is significantly lower than without the extra elevation. Furthermore, property and business owners can save money over the long term by having structures that are more resistant to costly flood damage.

This preliminary data represents the most accurate information available right now. As the mitigation process moves forward, these advisory elevations could change and be lower.

**FEMA'S Preliminary Data Is Just One Tool To Guide Rebuilding Process:**

Moving forward, the elevations identified in the ABFEs could be adjusted as the mapping processing is finalized and the formal federal maps are adopted over the next 18 to 24 months. Mitigation efforts such as reengineered beaches with more protective dune systems could also lead to adjustments in the final elevation standards.

FEMA released ABFEs for 194 New Jersey coastal communities in 10 counties.

FEMA applied a modified methodology to expedite the release of these preliminary maps based in part on National Academy of Science recommendations and using federal insurance standards.

FEMA will provide extensive, ongoing outreach and hands-on demonstrations to help impacted communities understand implications of the ABFEs.

For additional information, please visit [www.Region2Coastal.com/Sandy](http://www.Region2Coastal.com/Sandy)

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