

PINELLAS COUNTY

FLOOD PREVENTION MEASURES

Pinellas County performs the following activities designed to help reduce flood damages.

FLOOD INSURANCE RATE MAP (FIRM) DETERMINATIONS: The County maintains Flood Insurance Rate Maps for the **unincorporated areas of Pinellas County**. Inquirers are provided information relevant to Flood Zones upon request (Development Review Services (727) 464-3471). If you live within a city, your city government will provide this service. Flood zone and hurricane evacuation zone maps are now available on line, www.pinellascounty.org under “Interactive Maps – GIS.

PUBLIC OUTREACH: Every spring, residents of the **unincorporated County** receive a flyer with information on flood prevention and flood safety in their utility bills. Cities within Pinellas County provide similar information to their residents. Other public outreach efforts include: flood hazard announcements to repetitive loss properties and homeowner associations located wholly or partially within the 100-year floodplain, and information dissemination at public libraries, home shows, and the annual Hurricane Expo.

FLOOD PROTECTION LIBRARY: The Pinellas County Planning Department places flood prevention, flood mitigation, flood insurance, flood safety, and related subjects on file at the following libraries: East Lake Community, Palm Harbor, Largo and Seminole Public Libraries for residents of the **unincorporated County**. Cities within Pinellas County provide similar information within their respective libraries.

FLOOD PROTECTION ASSISTANCE: The County Building Department is available to review and critique new construction and retrofitting plans, plus have information regarding elevation certificates. The Building Department, (727) 464-3241, also has a list of contractors with experience in retrofitting techniques and construction. (**NOTE:** Pinellas County does not recommend or endorse any specific contractor)

OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION: Over the years, Pinellas County has acquired property within the regulated floodplain for use as parks and open space. Such examples include Brooker Creek, McKay Creek, Weedon Island, beach access parks, and parks adjacent to lakes.

LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE: Pinellas County’s Land Development Code serves to regulate new construction and development in the **unincorporated County** in areas subject to flooding. Other local governments within the County have similar development codes.

AREAS OF REPETITIVE FLOODING: Pinellas County has identified areas within the **unincorporated County** that have experienced repetitive flooding. In many of those areas, the County has completed stormwater projects to reduce the frequency and extent of those flood events. The Public Works Department, (727) 464-8900, also performs maintenance on the stormwater management system within the **unincorporated areas of the County**.

For additional information on Pinellas County’s flood prevention measures, please contact the Pinellas County Planning Department at (727) 464-8200. If you are a resident of a city or town, please contact your local government for information on local flood prevention measures.

Pinellas County continually strives to increase awareness of the hazards of flooding. Information regarding flood damage reduction, flood mitigation, flood insurance, floodplain and flood zones is available for viewing through the Pinellas County Planning Department, and on file at the following libraries for residents of the **unincorporated areas** of Pinellas County: East Lake Community Library, Palm Harbor Public Library, Largo Public Library, and Seminole Public Library.

Pinellas County's Emergency Management Department provides Hurricane Evacuation mapping services. In addition to providing free hurricane evacuation maps, the Department provides evacuation and shelter information on-line at: www.pinellascounty.org. The hurricane evacuation level can be found simply by clicking on "Check Your Evac Level" on the left hand side of the web page. More information can be found on the Pinellas County homepage by clicking on "Departments" under Special Interests on the right hand side of the screen, and then select "Emergency Management". On the left hand side of the screen under Emergency Links, the choices include "Evacuation Level Lookup" and enter the address, "Evacuation Level Map" which illustrates the evacuation level locations throughout the County, "Weather Links" for storm information, and "Amateur Radio Links" for the SkyWarn homepage.

Pinellas County's new Emergency E-mail Information Service provides Internet users the very latest official information during emergency activations. News releases, shelter openings, declarations of emergency, road closures and status reports are delivered via e-mail. Updates will be given **only** during times when the Pinellas County Emergency Operations Center is activated, so Internet users can keep up with the latest emergency information from their home computer. Official emergency information is also available on the County's cable television station, **Pinellas 18: Your County Connection**, and at the County's interactive website: www.pinellascounty.org.

The Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners is voluntarily participating in the National Flood Insurance Program's (NFIP) Community Rating System (CRS) program. The purpose of the CRS program is to encourage local governments participating in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) to conduct activities that exceed the minimum flood damage and flood hazard mitigation requirements of the NFIP. The incentive for taking part in the CRS program is a reduction in the flood insurance premiums for those unincorporated residents who live within the 100-year floodplain and purchase flood insurance. Pinellas County performs creditable activities designed to reduce flood damages and mitigate flood hazards. The CRS program rates a community based on the flood-related activities performed. Presently, Pinellas County is rated as a Class 8 community with a flood insurance premium reduction of ten percent for its residents living in the unincorporated areas. This rating saves the unincorporated residents and businesses nearly \$1 million annually in flood insurance premiums.

As part of the Board's obligation to carry out certain functions to maintain the premium reduction in flood insurance for those applicable residents, the County is continuing to provide information, by request, on whether a parcel is located in the 100-year floodplain, according to the Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs). This floodplain information can be obtained for unincorporated county parcels by contacting Pinellas County Development Review Services at (727) 464-3471. This phone number also has a voice mailbox so messages consisting of the caller's name, phone number, and the 18-digit parcel I.D. number of the property in question can be left. If a parcel is located within a Pinellas County municipality, that city should be called directly for floodplain information.

Since Pinellas County participates in the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) National Flood Insurance Program, the County, therefore, must comply with at least FEMA's minimum standards for floodplain construction. The NFIP requires new construction and reconstruction/remodeling in flood prone areas to adhere to specific floodplain development codes. Further, new construction and major reconstruction/remodeling must be elevated to or above the Base Flood Elevation as determined by FEMA's Flood Insurance Rate Maps. If you want to discuss elevation certificates, flood proofing options for your home or office building, or are building or remodeling in the **unincorporated areas** of Pinellas County, call the Building Department at (727) 464-3241 for plan review. The Building Department also has existing elevation certificates for newer constructed structures. To find out if the parcel is in a flood zone, call the County's Development Review Services Department at (727) 464-3471.