

Frequently Asked Questions – Floodplain Development

Explain the difference between floodplain and floodway: FEMA defines a floodplain as any land area prone to being deluded by floodwaters from any source. Floodplain is an area of ground that lays low and is adjacent to a river or creeks, formed mainly of river sediments. The floodway includes the channel and adjacent overbank areas necessary to effectively transport floodwaters.

My property has never flooded, why is it located in a flood zone? FEMA has designated several flood zones for properties according to flood risk. These properties are regulated to promote public health, safety, and general welfare and to minimize flood losses.

How long does the permitting authority have to review my Floodplain Development permit application? Kleberg County Floodplain Administrator must either approve or deny the planning materials you submitted with your Floodplain Development permit application within 30 days after the receipt.

What laws and rules govern Floodplain Development? City of Kingsville Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance

What needs to be permitted? All development within regulated flood zones require a Floodplain Development Permit issued by the City of Kingsville Floodplain Manager prior to construction. Examples, including but not limited to, new construction of buildings, addition to existing building, remodel existing building, grading, fill, pool and fence.

What is an Elevation Certificate? An elevation certificate is a document that lists a building's location, lowest point of elevation, flood zone and other characteristics, according to FEMA. The certificate shows how your property's elevation compares to the base flood elevation on a flood map.

How do I check to see if my existing house has an Elevation Certificate on file? The City of Kingsville Engineering Department will be able to search by the property's address and/or legal description for any permits on file.

How high does my new house need to be elevated? As part of the permitting process, an elevation certificate is required to determine how high the house must be elevated from ground level. The City of Kingsville Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance requires a 1-foot freeboard in addition to the base flood level.

How do I get an elevation certificate? If you're purchasing a home, you may also want to ask the sellers if they have an elevation certificate, or to provide it before your closing. Hiring a professional land surveyor to evaluate your property and complete a new or updated elevation certificate is another option.

What happens if I don't have an issued permit before I start construction? A stop work order will be issued to the property owner and contractor on site by the Guadalupe County Environmental Health Floodplain Manager and/or Code Enforcement Officer for violating the Guadalupe County Flood Damage Prevention Order. The property owner will need to complete a floodplain development application and receive a permit before construction may begin. If a permit has not been issued and construction begins, a citation will be issued to the property owner and Code Enforcement will file a criminal complaint with the Justice of the Peace.