

[Frequently Asked Questions – Floodplain Development](#)

What is the difference between floodplain and floodway?

FEMA defines a floodplain as any land area susceptible to being inundated by floodwaters from any source. Floodplain is an area of low-lying ground adjacent to a river or creeks, formed mainly of river sediments and the floodway includes the channel and adjacent overbank areas necessary to effectively convey 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 the 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?

Guadalupe County Environmental Health Floodplain Manager must either approve or deny the planning materials you submitted with your Floodplain Development permit application within 30 days after the receipt. *NFIP Sec 60.3*

What laws and rules govern Floodplain Development?

Texas V.T.C.A, Texas Water Code 16 & 26
Guadalupe County Flood Damage Prevention Order

What needs to be permitted?

All development within a regulated flood zones require a Floodplain Development Permit issued by the Guadalupe County Environmental Health 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, fence, boat dock, and retaining wall.

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?

Guadalupe County Environmental Health 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?

Part of the permitting process, an elevation certificate is required to determine how high the house must be elevated from ground level. Guadalupe County Flood Damage Prevention Order requires a 2 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 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.