



New Update from Lee County

December 6, 2017

Here is an update and information on Lee County's flood mitigation efforts post-Hurricane Irma.

UPDATES:

- ? Lee County Department of Transportation's nine drainage crews continue working on ditch maintenance countywide.
- ? Crews are working this week on the southernmost east-west canal in Island Park to ensure that post-storm sediment is removed. DOT is fixing washouts on canal banks. Next steps include ditch work in the Island Park area along Island Park Road to clear sediment.
- ? The arrival of dry season enables DOT crews across the county to conduct more extensive ditch work.
- ? Flood consultants for Lee County Natural Resources are meeting with many individuals in addition to several community groups, HOAs and other stakeholders such as the City of Bonita Springs, Village of Estero, Lehigh Acres Municipal Services Improvement District and the South Florida Water Management District.

COMPLETION FOR THE INITIAL FLOODING ASSESSMENT PROJECTS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

- ? Imperial River/ Spring Creek/ Halfway Creek/ Estero River: Field work 85 % complete
- ? Ten Mile Canal/ Island Park/ Briarcliff/ Six Mile Cypress: Field work 85 % complete
- ? Orange River/ Hickey Creek/ Bedman Creek: Field work 75% complete
- ? Bayshore Creek/ Popash Creek/ Stroud Creek: Field work 75% complete
- ? Whiskey Creek/ Villas/ Pine Lake: Field work 75% complete

Note: Initial Flood Assessment Projects are the process by which the county identifies causes and contributing factors to the recent flooding and looking at what can be done to improve drainage on a relatively short-term basis. Local consultants are in the field identifying blocked pipes, culverts, ditches, canals, creeks and streams for clearing. They are also reviewing development permits to determine if they are causing or contributing to the flooding problem. Data from this effort will enable the county to proceed with early activities that will provide relief prior to next rainy season.

Question and Answer about Base Flood Elevations

Question: Is there a map of the Base Flood elevations (BFE) for Island Park and the businesses around Old U.S. 41?

Answer: Flood Insurance Rate Maps, which include BFEs, have been available for access since Lee County entered the NFIP in 1984. The FEMA Flood Map Service Center (MSC) is the official public source for flood hazard information produced in support of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). <https://msc.fema.gov/portal>. However, we have various links to these maps on our website <https://www.lee.gov/dcd/flood/firm>. (Island Park is on Map Panel 0576F.) We also have an interactive App for finding flood zones and

base flood elevations. This App is called "Find My Flood Zone"
<http://leegis.leegov.com/floodzone>

Typically an Elevation Certificate would indicate if structures within neighborhood developments are below the BFE. Structures built prior to 1984 will not have Elevation Certificates. Please see our webpage dedicated to finding Elevation Certificates
<https://www.leegov.com/dcd/eServ/searchec>.

If you have any issues locating the neighborhood developments you are interested in on the maps referenced above, please let us know and we can assist you.

Question: If the lowest floor of the building is above the BFE, you are exempt from these provisions, correct? This does not include parking or outside structures such as porches.

Answer: If a portion of an existing building is at or above BFE, those portions would be considered compliant. If the structure is determined to be substantially damaged (defined as the cost of repairs exceeding 50% of the value of the structure), the entire structure must be brought into compliance.

The lowest floor of the building is only one component to consider. For the structure as a whole to be compliant, other factors are taken into consideration, for example: machinery or equipment servicing the building, utilities, attached garages and enclosed patios/porches.

The lowest floor may be at or even above BFE, but if these other components are below BFE additional flood compliance measures may be necessary.

Covered open areas such as a pool cage, gazebo or lanai are permitted to be below BFE. Each structure is examined on an individual basis. This is why an elevation certificate is critical to determine if a structure is fully compliant with our Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance.

Question: The "50 percent of market value" is based on the real estate market value before the storms/damage, correct?

Answer: Yes, it is based on the pre-flood/pre-storm value.

Question: The "costs of improvements or repairs" would not include the "mitigation" portion -- mitigation is the costs of clean-up, demolition and debris removal. Costs start at the point in which the property is being repaired or improved. Or a better definition would be the costs that are permanent or remain in the home after repairs are done. An example would be the costs of cleaning products or services to remove mold or damage would not be counted, but installing new kitchen cabinets that remain permanent in the structure would be included in the "costs of repairs," correct?

Answer: Correct

Question: Are you providing any special accommodations or reduced costs for Building Permits for those affected by these disasters?

Answer: We are reducing the permit cost for all hurricane repair permits to the minimum, regardless of the scope of work. Some permitting processes may be expedited after a hurricane or other disaster if Lee County Commissioners declare an emergency and enact the County's Emergency Permitting Procedures. This was the case with Hurricane Irma. This is outlined in [Administrative Code 7-8](#) and specific accommodations depend on the extent of damage after the disaster.

See this webpage for more information:
<https://www.leegov.com/dcd/BldPermitServ/AppsProcd/EmergProcd>

Question: Anything else you'd like to add?

Another helpful county website landing page is
leegis.leegov.com/floodzone

or

<http://leegis.leegov.com/FTPData/PDFs/AGOL/FloodZoneNewMap.pdf>

How you can help:

[Sign up](#) for Email Notifications for Flood related information and optionally [complete a flooding questionnaire](#) to enhance our consultants' data by uploading photos, providing observations and sharing data for flooding experienced during the August 25-27 Rain Event or Hurricane Irma. This information is helpful in our evaluation of the flood events and identifying possible solutions. Not a computer person? Call the county's flood hotline at 239-533-8888. The same two sites can be used to report current flood-related problems, which will help the county address them.

Lee County Flood Hotline 239-533-8888

Forward this email to others and they can sign up for update e-blasts.

Visit Lee County's website at www.leegov.com