



NEWS Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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LETTERS BEING SENT TO ROCKPORT PROPERTY OWNERS WITH SUBSTANTIAL DAMAGE

ROCKPORT, TX – Following a hurricane, FEMA requires the city and other participating jurisdictions to make damage inspections and determinations on whether the costs to improve or repair a damaged building or structure are estimated to equal or exceed 50 percent of the building's fair market value (2017 tax assessed value).

As required by FEMA, the owners of structures in Rockport that appear to be substantially damaged as a result of the hurricane, will receive a letter indicating the city has estimated they have substantial damage. Aransas County and other municipalities are conducting their own substantial damage assessments. There are 182 residents who will receive this letter.

These determinations are done using software provided by FEMA. The intent is that structures damaged beyond 50 percent need to be improved to meet current floodplain regulations and building codes. That way, in future storms, similar damage will not occur and improving structures will prevent unsafe conditions.

City and FEMA staff worked together to complete inspections for all structures in the Special Flood Hazard within the city of Rockport to determine if the damage caused by Hurricane Harvey is estimated to be “substantial.” Other sources of information were used to determine damage, including flooding depth grids and pre- and post-storm pictorial aerials.

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These letters say that if the property owner disagrees with the determination, they may submit the following during permitting for improvements to their structures:

1. Cost estimate for the repair of all damages sustained to their structures, prepared and signed by a licensed general contractor. The contractor will be required to sign an affidavit indicating the cost estimate submitted includes all damages to the structure.

Please note: any additional renovations or improvements that an owner is planning to make to the structure while repair work is underway must be included in the contractor's estimate.

2. A Uniform appraisal of the market value of your structure before the damage occurred.

Once the final value of the structure and the contractor's certified cost estimates are completed and agreed upon, and if the structure is determined to be substantially damaged and the structure is below the minimum required flood elevation, the structure must be brought into compliance with Chapter 50 Floods (City of Rockport Code of Ordinances), the 2012 International Residential or Building Code, and other local, state and federal codes.

In order to meet these codes, owners may decide to:

- Elevate their structures, or change them in some other way to comply with those regulations to avoid future losses;
- Relocate or demolish the structure; or,
- Flood-proof a nonresidential structure.

Almost all repairs, reconstruction and new construction are subject to the City of Rockport Code of Regulations, the 2012 International Building Codes, and require a permit.

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Construction activities conducted without a proper permit may be considered non-compliant and may result in daily fines and/or the removal of the non-compliant construction through Code Compliance.

Prior to beginning repairs, improvements or reconstruction, property owners should contact the City of Rockport Building & Development Services Department for a permit. Failing to enforce floodplain requirements could put the City in jeopardy of losing flood insurance, disaster assistance and federal-backed loans and grants for our citizens.

For questions regarding a homeowner's substantial damage determination or to request a copy of the detailed substantial damage determination inspection report, please contact Amanda Torres, City of Rockport Floodplain Program, at (361) 790-1125 or via email at communityplanner@cityofrockport.com.