



FEMA PRELIMINARY FLOOD MAP UPDATE

APPEALS AND COMMENTS FACT SHEET

FEMA'S APPEAL AND COMMENT PROCESS

The "90-day Appeal/Comment Period" period for the updated FEMA preliminary flood maps began March 3, 2021. During this period, formal requests to review and revise information shown on the digital map or in the accompanying Flood Insurance Study (FIS) will be accepted for FEMA consideration. The appeals must include appropriate supporting data and documentation. Applicant should be prepared to perform hydrologic and hydraulic analyses, to plot new and/or revised Flood Profiles, and to delineate revised flood zone and regulatory floodway boundaries as necessary.

The 90-day Appeal/Comment Period is part of the regulatory mapping process outlined in the Code of Federal Regulations. A community, an owner or lessee of a property, or anyone impacted by the updated Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) can submit information for review. Appeals must be submitted to FEMA Region 4 no later than the 90th day of the appeal period.

WHAT IS AN APPEAL?

An appeal is a formal request to have a FIRM amended based on an additional engineering study, which must include data that proves the proposed flood hazard information is scientifically or technically incorrect; contains an indisputable mathematical or measurement error; or reflects that a changed physical condition has occurred. All appeals must be certified by a registered professional engineer or licensed land surveyor and must include the required revisions to the FIRM and/or the Flood Insurance Study (FIS) report.

WHAT IS A COMMENT?

A comment is any submittal that does not meet the requirements outlined for appeals. Comments may include any feedback regarding road names, jurisdictional boundaries, and other base map features, or concerns regarding proposed flood hazard information or any technical submittal that does not meet the full technical submittal for appeals.

HOW TO SUBMIT A COMMENT OR APPEAL

All comments and appeals should be submitted directly to the FEMA Mapping Partner with a copy to the county's Floodplain Administrator.

FEMA MAPPING PARTNER

c/o Michael Taylor
1360 Peachtree Street Northeast, Suite 500
Atlanta, GA 30309
michael.taylor@aecom.com

FLOODPLAIN ADMINISTRATOR

Kathy Croteau, CBO, CFM, Building Official Sarasota
County Government
Planning and Development Services
Attn: Flood Maps
1001 Sarasota Center Blvd.
Sarasota, FL 34240
FloodMapAppeal@scgov.net



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WHAT HAPPENS AFTER AN APPEAL IS SUBMITTED?

FEMA, in coordination with the Regional Service Center (RSC), will review the submitted information and prepare an acknowledgement that will state one of the following:

- The appeal is valid and a change to the preliminary FIRM and/or FIS is warranted.
- Additional data or information is needed to complete the review.
- The information is considered a comment and will or will not be incorporated.

FEMA provides a 30-day comment period from the date of an appeal or comment resolution letter is issued to allow the community/appellant to review FEMA's findings. Any comments received during the 30-day period must be addressed and resolved before proceeding with the Letter of Final Determination (LFD). There are, however, some limitations to an appeal. Due to map scale limitations, changes to individual lots or structures typically cannot be shown on the FIRM, so the appeals process typically cannot be used to remove a property from the floodplain.

LETTER OF MAP AMENDMENT (LOMA)

The LOMA process is available to property owners who believe their home or property has been inadvertently included in the floodplain. LOMAs officially change the zone designation for the structure or property on an effective FIRM, not a preliminary FIRM, therefore it is recommended that applications submit their LOMA application no more than 30 days before the preliminary FIRM is set to become effective. Once approved, an official amendment to an effective map is sent out by letter to the property owner.

WHERE TO VIEW THE FEMA MAPS

Preliminary FIRMs and FIS can be viewed online at <https://ags3.scgov.net/sarcoflood/>. Please be advised the files are best viewed with a high-speed internet connection. If you have trouble navigating the website, please call the Sarasota County Contact Center at 941-861-5000, Monday through Friday (except holidays) from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. for assistance.

For FEMA questions, call the FEMA Map Information Exchange (FMIX) at **877-FEMA-MAP** (1-877-336-2627). The FMIX hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. through 6:30 p.m. Eastern Standard Time. You can also visit the FEMA Map Information website:

www.floodmaps.fema.gov/fhm/fmx_main.html.

For flood insurance information, call 1-888-379-9531 or visit www.FloodSmart.gov.