

Two years after Harvey, flood insurance is still a smart investment

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AUSTIN, Texas — August 25, the second anniversary of Hurricane Harvey's landfall along the Texas coast, is a great reminder to buy or renew a policy with the National Flood Insurance Program.

When Hurricane Harvey struck the Gulf Coast two years ago, it brought prolonged rain and flooding to much of southeast Texas. After the storm, about 92,000 Texans received flood insurance payouts for an estimated \$8.92 billion.

Many Texans without flood insurance, however, had to rebuild their lives with personal savings and whatever federal assistance they were eligible to receive.

Floods are the most common and most costly natural disaster in the United States. A single inch of water in an average home can cause more than \$26,000 in damage, and floods have struck all 50 states in the past five years.

Homeowners and renters policies are great for what they cover — but they rarely include any damage from flooding.

Those who rent their home can cover the contents of their dwelling for up to \$100,000 in flood damage. Homeowners are eligible for up to \$100,000 in contents coverage and \$250,000 for the building itself.



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Page 1 of 2

Owners of residential properties with five or more units can purchase \$100,000 of contents coverage and \$500,000 for the building. Commercial property owners can purchase \$500,000 for each.

People in areas with low flood risk may qualify for a Preferred Risk Policy, which provides the same level of coverage as a standard policy, but at a lower cost. About 26 percent of flood insurance claims come from low- or moderate-risk areas.

The National Flood Insurance Program is only available in communities that participate in NFIP and pass floodplain management regulations to reduce the impact of future weather events. To find out if you're in an NFIP community, contact your insurance agent or your local floodplain manager.

If your agent doesn't sell flood insurance, contact the NFIP Call Center at 800-427-4661 for a referral. For more information, visit www.fema.gov/NFIP or www.FloodSmart.gov.

You may be eligible to forgo the 30-day waiting period for a new policy if your building is in a newly designated Special Flood Hazard Area, your property is affected by flooding on burned federal land or you're buying flood insurance in connection with establishing, increasing, extending or renewing a mortgage.

For additional information on Hurricane Harvey and Texas recovery, visit the Hurricane Harvey disaster web page at www.fema.gov/disaster/4332, Facebook at www.facebook.com/FEMAHarvey, the FEMA Region 6 Twitter account at www.twitter.com/FEMARegion6 or the Texas Division of Emergency Management website at www.dps.texas.gov/dem.



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Page 2 of 2