

Building Safety Month: 5 Tips for a More Resilient Home

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CHICAGO – May is Building Safety Month and an important reminder to take steps to reduce disaster risks and ensure your home is resilient to severe weather events.

“In the Midwest, we face the threat of multiple hazards year round. The warmer months ahead bring the risk of storms and flooding that have the potential to cause thousands of dollars of damage to our homes and communities,” said Kevin M. Sligh, acting regional administrator, FEMA Region 5. “We can reduce those and other disaster risks through simple mitigation efforts that reinforce and protect the places we live, work, learn and congregate.”

1. **Verify your home is built in compliance with local building safety codes.** The enforcement of modern building codes by your local officials is essential to helping minimize the risks of death, injury and property damage in the event of a disaster.
2. **Check with your local building safety department before beginning home repair or improvement projects.** Many building safety departments require permits for home repair or improvement projects, including structural, electrical or plumbing work. Getting a permit will involve an inspection of the work, providing an added safety measure to protect you, your family and your home.
3. **Elevate and anchor utilities & secure outdoor items.** Elevate and anchor your critical utilities, including electrical panels, propane tanks, sockets, wiring, appliances, and heating systems to reduce the risk of flood waters damaging them. Secure lawn furniture and any other loose outdoor items that may become windborne and cause injury or damage during high wind events.
4. **Reduce basement flooding risks.** Install a water alarm and maintain a working sump pump to protect your basement. Install a battery-operated backup pump in case of power failure.



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Page 1 of 2

5. **Consider building or retrofitting to create a tornado safe room in your home.** For construction information and to ensure you achieve the highest level of protection for your family, visit www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/risk-management/safe-rooms.

For more information about building safety visit www.iccsafe.org/advocacy/building-safety-month/2021-building-safety-month/ or www.inspecttoprotect.org. Learn even more about how to prepare before a disaster strikes by visiting www.Ready.gov.

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