

# Contact Local Officials Before Rebuilding

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Like all natural disasters, tornadoes, severe storms, and floods can end up causing massive destruction to homes, property and infrastructure. Typically, these storms can cause the greatest damage to structures of light construction, including some residential and manufactured homes.

Mitigation measures are available to improve personal safety and reduce or eliminate the risk of future damages to structures and personal property. FEMA building specialists can give you information on how to repair, retrofit, or rebuild your home to be safer and stronger before the next disaster.

## Rebuilding

Every part of a building — from roofs, walls and siding to plumbing, septic systems and heating/air conditioning systems — may require a permit before you start to rebuild. A permit may also be needed for demolition.

Permits protect owners, residents, communities and buildings by making sure repairs and/or construction meet current building codes, standards, floodplain ordinances and construction techniques. Permits also provide a permanent record of compliance with elevation and/or retrofitting requirements, which is valuable information when selling the structure or obtaining flood insurance coverage.

## Local Building Officials

Before beginning repairs or rebuilding, always check with local building official:

- Building codes, permits, inspection requirements, and zoning ordinances may be involved.
- A floodplain ordinance will affect rebuilding when the structure has sustained substantial damage and is situated in a floodplain.

Building officials will reinforce the point that only licensed professionals are qualified to perform structural repair or structural mitigation work.



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## Mitigation Topics to Consider

### Roof Design

Roof failures are a common cause of major damage to buildings and their contents from high winds. There are mitigation measures that can be taken to reduce potential roof damage.

These mitigation measures include:

- Designing Wind-resistant Roofs
- Reinforcing Gable Roof Ends
- Securing Sheathing Properly
- Installing Shingles Properly

### Breach Points

Exterior doors and windows are the weakest parts of a structure's outer shell. If they are broken or blown in, high winds can enter a structure and create internal pressures which act on the roof and walls, resulting in serious damage. Once the structure is breached, wind, debris, and rain can damage the interior of the structure or injure any person inside.

Breach point mitigation measures include:

- Reinforcing Garage Doors
- Securing Double-entry Doors
- Installing Impact-resistant Glass

### Speak to a Specialist

Call 833-FEMA-4-US or 833-336-2487 to speak to a Mitigation Specialist about your needs, experiences, and how you can repair, retrofit, or rebuild safer and stronger. You may also reach a specialist by email at [FEMA-ARMit@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:FEMA-ARMit@fema.dhs.gov).

### Look Online for Resources



Visit <https://fema.cosocloud.com/armit/> or <https://fema.cosocloud.com/ar-es-mit/> for Spanish.

## Be Aware

If proper permits are not obtained, residents may be subject to stop-work orders, fines or penalties. Some communities may choose to waive permit fees but permits themselves cannot be waived.

FEMA does not recommend or endorse contractors, and officials warn people to be leery of contractors who claim they are authorized by FEMA. They are not.

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