



### **What is the FEMA Interim Advisory Flood Recovery Mapping?**

Following the Thomas Fire and 1/9 Debris Flow, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) developed Recovery Mapping for Santa Barbara County to determine “**areas of special flood hazard**” and for development and rebuilding in Montecito and unincorporated areas of Carpinteria until the permanent Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) can be completed in the next four to five years. View the maps at [www.readysbc.org/maps/](http://www.readysbc.org/maps/).

**NOTE:** *The Recovery Mapping is separate from the current FIRM, Debris Flow Hazard map and potential evacuations.*

### **Who is the “Floodplain Administrator?”**

The Floodplain Administrator is the Flood Control Director or his/her designated agent. The Flood Control Director for Santa Barbara County is Tom Fayram, Deputy Director for Water Resources. As a participant in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), the County has adopted floodplain management standards to protect new development and rebuilding of destroyed structures in conformance with federal requirements. In being a participant in NFIP, the County is eligible for disaster assistance. This also requires homes located in FEMA designated flood risk areas to have flood insurance if their mortgage is with a federally insured lending institution.

### **How do I apply the map before submitting an application to rebuild?**

The County’s Planning and Development Department has assigned impacted property owners with skilled case managers to be a single point of contact through the rebuilding process. Residents whose homes were damaged or destroyed are encouraged to meet individually with their assigned case managers to better understand the recovery map and learn how to lessen risk when rebuilding. Meetings with case managers will cover considerations such as property-specific flood elevations, options for rebuilding, and a detailed layout of the permitting process. To find your case manager, call (805) 568-2090, email to [pad@co.santa-barbara.ca.us](mailto:pad@co.santa-barbara.ca.us), or visit the Planning and Development Zoning Counter at 123 E. Anapamu St., Santa Barbara 93101.

### **Why are the FEMA maps considered interim?**

The FEMA maps will be used for development and rebuilding in Montecito and unincorporated Carpinteria until the permanent Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) mapping of the area is completed. FEMA advises that these new maps be used in conjunction with the existing FIRMs, using whichever base flood elevation is higher, until the new FIRM is published. These maps will help bridge the time until the new FIRMs are developed.

### **Will this new map impact my flood insurance rates?**

The updated flood advisory recovery maps do not affect insurance considerations. The current FEMA flood insurance rate maps (FIRMs) will be used for insurance purposes until new, permanent maps are developed in the next four to five years. Property owners should consult with County staff from Planning & Development and Flood Control to fully understand how this new data can be used to support rebuilding efforts. The Recovery Map does not impact rating for flood Insurance.

### **Can homeowners purchase flood insurance now?**

Yes. Santa Barbara County is eligible for disaster assistance and requires homes located in FEMA designated flood risk areas to have flood insurance if their mortgage is with a federally insured lending institution. However, regardless of location, any homeowner is eligible to purchase flood insurance.

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## **Will the FEMA maps require homeowners to elevate homes when rebuilding?**

The County has adopted floodplain management standards to protect new development and rebuilding of destroyed structures that are in alignment with federal requirements. Typically, minimum finish floor elevation of new structures within the special flood hazard area is required to be two-feet above the 100-year flood plain as defined by FEMA. For assistance, please consult your P&D case manager.

## **Where can I find the map legend? What do the colors and numbers represent?**

Numbers shown indicate advisory flood elevations; the yellow lines show limits of water inundation and High Hazard Areas; blue indicates depth; and pink is the water surface elevation contours in feet. To facilitate a safety element appropriate to the changed conditions within the High Hazard Areas, the rebuilding will be informed by the water surface elevations within the boundary.

## **What is the new base flood elevation, and what is the change/elevation difference now and before January 9, 2018?**

The new base elevations vary site by site. There is no one single elevation that applies to everyone. For assistance, please consult your P&D case manager.

## **How do we find out what the elevation of our property was pre-debris flow?**

The County does not typically have this information, other than perhaps through publicly available posted topographic information such as on Flood Control's website. For assistance, please consult your P&D case manager.

## **How do we find out what our elevation is now?**

The FEMA Recovery Mapping will inform you of the ground surface as of January 16, but it doesn't account for any changes made since that date due to mud removal. For assistance interpreting the map, layers, legend and implications, please contact your case manager.

## **If a house that was destroyed in the debris flow is not in a FEMA flood plain on the current FIRM map, but is in a high hazard area in the new maps, do we have to rebuild to the new base flood elevation in the interim hazard map?**

Yes, plus two feet to minimum finish floor elevation.

## **Why are some areas that were badly damaged or destroyed not listed as hazard areas?**

This is a flood (water) map, not a debris flow map.

## **Limitations of Mapping**

The Recovery Maps for Santa Barbara County have the benefit of using the latest modeling technology and topographic data available and can provide valuable insight into what would happen during a large rain event. The modeling and analyses also provide a basis for future mapping that may be used to update the FIRM for Santa Barbara County. However, due to the complex nature of debris flow events and the unknown degree of uncertainty of the assumptions made, actual areas of future inundation depend on conditions that may be different from what is shown in the mapping tool. The Recovery Maps should only be used to guide rebuilding along with information from the FEMA FIRM and County guidance. This Recovery Mapping will NOT be used to determine evacuations. Evacuations will be based on other factors and mapping.