

Special Building Standards in Flood Hazard Areas



The excerpts below may have been abbreviated, paraphrased or edited to help provide clarity. This information should not be construed as replacing or superseding existing code language.

I. Special Building Standards

In all flood hazard areas, these general standards apply:

SCC 30.65.110 Flood-proofing: general standards.

The following regulations shall apply in all special flood hazard areas.

- (1) Anchoring and construction techniques.
 - (a) All new construction and substantial improvements shall be:
 - (i) anchored to prevent flotation, collapse or lateral movement of the structure;
 - (ii) constructed using materials and utility equipment resistant to flood damage; and
 - (iii) constructed using methods and practices that minimize flood damage.
 - (b) All mobile homes shall be anchored to resist flotation, collapse, or lateral movement. Minimum anchoring requirements shall be those established by chapter 30.54A SCC.
- (2) Utilities.
 - (a) All new and replacement water supply systems shall be designed to minimize or eliminate infiltration of flood waters into the system;
 - (b) New and replacement sanitary sewage systems shall be designed to minimize or eliminate infiltration of flood waters into the systems and discharge from the systems into flood waters; and
 - (c) On-site waste disposal systems shall be located to avoid impairment to them or contamination from them during flooding.
- (3) Subdivision proposals. All subdivision, short subdivision, binding site plan, planned residential development, or rural cluster subdivision proposals shall:
 - (a) Be consistent with the need to minimize flood damage;
 - (b) Have roadways, public utilities, and other facilities such as sewer, gas, electrical, and water systems located and constructed to minimize flood damage;
 - (c) Have adequate drainage provided to reduce exposure to flood damage; and
 - (d) Include base flood elevation data.
- (4) Watercourse alterations. The flood carrying capacity within altered or relocated portions of any watercourse shall be maintained. Prior to the approval of any alteration or relocation of a watercourse in riverine situations, the department shall notify adjacent communities and the State Department of Ecology, and submit evidence of such notification to FEMA of the proposed development.

(Added Amended Ord. 02-064, December 9, 2002, Eff date February 1, 2003)

In all flood hazard areas where base flood elevation data has been provided, or where the County can reasonably make use of base flood elevation data available from federal, state or other sources, these specific flood proofing standards apply:

SCC 30.65.120 Floodproofing: specific standards.

In all special flood hazard areas where base elevation data has been provided as set forth in SCC 30.65.100, the following regulations shall apply, in addition to the general regulations of SCC 30.65.110:

- (1) All electrical, heating, ventilation, plumbing, and air conditioning equipment that is permanently affixed to a structure and which may be subject to floodwater damage shall be elevated a minimum of one foot above the base flood elevation or higher (unless within an approved watertight structure).
- (2) Residential construction.
 - (a) New construction and substantial improvement of any residential structure shall have the lowest floor, including basement, elevated a minimum of one foot above the base flood elevation.
 - (b) Fully enclosed areas below the lowest floor that are subject to flooding are prohibited, or shall be designed to automatically equalize hydrostatic flood forces on exterior walls by allowing for the entry and exit of floodwaters. Designs for meeting this requirement must either be certified by a registered professional engineer or architect or must meet or exceed the following minimum criteria:
 - (i) a minimum of two openings having a total net area of not less than one square inch for every square foot of enclosed area subject to flooding shall be provided;
 - (ii) the bottom of all openings shall be no higher than one foot above grade;
 - (iii) openings may be equipped with screens, louvers, or other coverings or devices only if they permit the automatic entry and exit of floodwaters.
- (3) Nonresidential construction. New construction and substantial improvement of any commercial, industrial or other nonresidential structure shall either have the lowest floor, including basement, elevated a minimum of one foot above the base flood elevation; or, together with attendant utility and sanitary facilities, shall:
 - (a) Be floodproofed so that below an elevation one foot above base flood level the structure is watertight with walls substantially impermeable to the passage of water; and
 - (b) Have structural components capable of resisting hydrostatic and hydrodynamic loads and effects of buoyancy.
- (4) Agricultural construction. New construction and substantial improvement of any agricultural structure shall have the lowest floor, including basement, elevated a minimum of one foot above the base flood elevation; and meet the floodproofing requirements of SCC 30.65.120(3). In the alternative, new construction and substantial improvement of any agricultural structure shall, , together with attendant utility and sanitary facilities, :
 - (a) Have a low potential for structural flood damage; and shall not exceed a maximum assessed value for the cost of construction of \$30,000. The market value of construction shall be determined by the department in accordance with the valuation procedure utilized in conjunction with the setting of building permit fees;
 - (b) Be designed and oriented to allow the free passage of floodwaters through the structure in a manner affording minimum flood damage; and
 - (c) Construction under the provisions of SCC 30.65.120(4)(c) above will result in increased premium rates for flood insurance which may be as high as \$25.00 per \$100.00 of insurance coverage, or more.

(5) Mobile homes.

- (a) Mobile homes shall be anchored in accordance with SCC 30.65.110(1)(b), and shall have the lowest floor elevated a minimum of one foot above the base flood elevation.
- (b) The repair, reconstruction or improvement of existing mobile home parks (including streets, utilities and pads), and mobile homes not placed in a mobile home park, shall have:
 - (i) pads or lots elevated on compacted fill or on pilings so that the lowest floor of the mobile home will be a minimum of one foot above the base flood level;
 - (ii) adequate surface drainage and access provided for a hauler; and
 - (iii) in the instance of elevation on pilings (A) lots large enough to permit steps, (B) piling foundations placed in stable soil no more than 10 feet apart, and (C) reinforcement provided for pilings extending more than six feet above the ground level.

(6) Critical facilities shall have the lowest floor elevated to three feet or more above the level of the base flood elevation at the site. Floodproofing and sealing measures must be taken to ensure that toxic substances will not be displaced by or released into flood waters. Access routes elevated to or above the level of the base flood plain shall be provided to all critical facilities to the extent possible.

(7) Recreational vehicles, when otherwise permitted by county code, shall

- (a) Be on the site for fewer than 180 consecutive days;
- (b) Be fully licensed and ready for highway use, on its wheels or jacking system, attached to the site only by quick disconnect type utilities and security devices, and have no permanently attached additions; or
- (c) Meet the mobile home anchoring and elevation standards of SCC 30.65.120(5).

In flood hazard areas where base flood elevation data has not been provided, both of these standards apply:

- **SCC 30.65.110** (Flood-proofing: general standards, see above)
- **SCC 30.65.120** (Flood-proofing: specific standards, see above)

When regulatory floodway for a stream has not been designated, these regulations apply:

(SCC 30.65.100 (3))

When a regulatory floodway for a stream has not been designated, the county may require that applicants for new construction and substantial improvements reasonably utilize the best available information from a federal, state, or other source to consider the cumulative effect of existing, proposed, and anticipated future development and determine that the increase in the water surface elevation of the base flood will not be more than one foot at any point in the community. Building and development near streams without a designated floodway shall comply with the requirements of 44 CFR 60.3(b)(3) and (4) and (C)(10) of the National Flood Insurance Program regulations.