<u>FAQ: FEMA Home Elevation Grants</u>

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<u>My home has flooded a lot so I qualify, right?</u>

Home elevation grants are given based on <u>flood claims paid</u> out by FEMA, not how often or badly your home has flooded. If FEMA did not pay significant sums to repair your home, you are unlikely to qualify.

<u>My neighbors got elevation grant funding, so I should too!</u>

These <u>nationwide</u> grants have become very popular and the competition is intense. As a result, the standards have risen; some homes approved in 2015 (Pequannock's first grant) would not receive funding today. In 2020, there was $200 million available, but FEMA received applications for $440 million – *over double* the funding available. Out of all the applications filed nationwide last year, only 21 were successful.

<u>Does it matter who my flood insurance policy is with?</u>

Yes! You must have a current *FEMA NFIP (National Flood Insurance Program) policy*, or one with an *approved-affiliate company* to qualify. Flood claim losses must have been paid by FEMA's NFIP, or they do not count for this program.

<u>How do I know if I qualify?</u>

The best way is to provide your home address to Pequannock's Flood Resilience Officer – see contact info above. Basic requirements include:

1) Current NFIP flood insurance policy
2) Repetitive Loss history [4 claims @ $5 K each, **or**, 2 claims = 25% of home's market value]
3) Meets FEMA's Benefit-Cost Analysis standards (computer model)

More details are on the **Flood Information** page, **<u>News Briefs</u>**, **FEMA Elevation Grants** – "**<u>do you qualify</u>**?"

<u>How do I apply?</u>

FEMA only accepts applications <u>from communities</u> once a year; the application date varies. If you are interested, please contact the Township's Flood Resilience Officer [see contact information above] to be reviewed for potential eligibility.

<u>What is the application process?</u>

1) Township contacts potentially-eligible homeowners to gather the required documents
2) After document and Benefit-Cost Analysis review, Township develops application for <u>eligible</u> properties
3) NJ State reviews; approved applications are sent to FEMA
4) FEMA reviews; approved application are sent to Congress
5) Congress approves and appropriates funding
6) Monies are sent to NJ State for project reimbursement after their completion

How soon will projects start?

It takes roughly 18-24 months from the date of Pequannock's application until funds are sent to NJ State and projects can begin. Timing depends mainly on FEMA's review and Congressional funding approval.

How long will construction take?

Construction usually takes 6-9 months depending on a number of variables: utility company disconnects, project complexity, weather, expertise of the contractor, etc. Overall, project usually take 12+ months when the design phase and time for utility disconnection and connection is taken into account.

What costs are covered?

FEMA funding covers what is necessary to elevate your home that is a reasonable price; their goal is to get you 'high and dry'. Any improvements to your home, including aesthetic touches, are not covered. Funding is also provided for temporary housing, moving expenses and landscape/driveway/walkway repair.

Once we get funding, what is the next step?

The Township's Flood Resilience Officer will meet with homeowners as a group to review the program, and then have in-depth, individual meetings. They will provide information/resources and be available throughout the process to assist you.

How much will FEMA pay?

FEMA's cost share ranges from 75 – 100% of eligible costs, depending on your flood claim history. This percentage is applied to all expense categories: construction, housing, moving costs, etc.

You will be responsible for the remainder (up to 25%) of eligible costs, as well as 100% of any ineligible costs (e.g. home improvements).

FEMA gives each homeowner a specific grant amount; that is your budget. Anything spent over that amount will be your responsibility.

How does payment work?

Pequannock borrows money to cover FEMA's cost share during the project; the Township gets reimbursed directly from NJ State at completion. Homeowners should be prepared to pay their cost share percentage throughout the project.