

## Definitions of FEMA Flood Zone Designations

Flood zones are geographic areas that the FEMA has defined according to varying levels of flood risk. These zones are depicted on a community's Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) or Flood Hazard Boundary Map. Each zone reflects the severity or type of flooding in the area.

### **MODERATE TO LOW RISK AREAS**

In communities that participate in the NFIP, flood insurance is available to all property owners and renters in these zones:

ZONE	DESCRIPTION
B, C, and X	Areas outside the 1-percent annual chance floodplain, areas of 1% annual chance sheet flow flooding where average depths are less than 1 foot, areas of 1% annual chance stream flooding where the contributing drainage area is less than 1 square mile, or areas protected from the 1% annual chance flood by levees. No Base Flood Elevations or depths are shown within this zone. Insurance purchase is not required in these zones.

### **HIGH RISK - COASTAL AREAS**

In communities that participate in the NFIP, mandatory flood insurance purchase requirements apply to all of these zones:

ZONE	DESCRIPTION
V	Coastal areas with a 1% or greater chance of flooding and an additional hazard associated with storm waves. These areas have a 26% chance of flooding over the life of a 30-year mortgage. No base flood elevations are shown within these zones.
VE, V1 - 30	Coastal areas with a 1% or greater chance of flooding and an additional hazard associated with storm waves. These areas have a 26% chance of flooding over the life of a 30-year mortgage. Base flood elevations derived from detailed analyses are shown at selected intervals within these zones.

### **UNDETERMINED RISK AREAS**

ZONE	DESCRIPTION
D	Areas with possible but undetermined flood hazards. No flood hazard analysis has been conducted. Flood insurance rates are commensurate with the uncertainty of the flood risk.

## HIGH RISK AREAS

In communities that participate in the NFIP, mandatory flood insurance purchase requirements apply to all of these zones:

ZONE	DESCRIPTION
A	Areas with a 1% annual chance of flooding and a 26% chance of flooding over the life of a 30-year mortgage. Because detailed analyses are not performed for such areas; no depths or base flood elevations are shown within these zones.
AE, A1-A30	Areas with a 1% annual chance of flooding and a 26% chance of flooding over the life of a 30-year mortgage. In most instances, base flood elevations derived from detailed analyses are shown at selected intervals within these zones.
AH	Areas with a 1% annual chance of shallow flooding, usually in the form of a pond, with an average depth ranging from 1 to 3 feet. These areas have a 26% chance of flooding over the life of a 30-year mortgage. Base flood elevations derived from detailed analyses are shown at selected intervals within these zones.
AO	River or stream flood hazard areas, and areas with a 1% or greater chance of shallow flooding each year, usually in the form of sheet flow, with an average depth ranging from 1 to 3 feet. These areas have a 26% chance of flooding over the life of a 30-year mortgage. Average flood depths derived from detailed analyses are shown within these zones.
AR	Areas with a temporarily increased flood risk due to the building or restoration of a flood control system (such as a levee or a dam). Mandatory flood insurance purchase requirements will apply, but rates will not exceed the rates for unnumbered A zones if the structure is built or restored in compliance with Zone AR floodplain management regulations.
A99	Areas with a 1% annual chance of flooding that will be protected by a Federal flood control system where construction has reached specified legal requirements. No depths or base flood elevations are shown within these zones.