



# FEMA

## *Elevated Home Barely Affected April Rain on the Delaware River*

**Harrisburg, PA** – When the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) gave the storm alert one day before April Fool’s Day, Don Menke yawned. “This must be a joke,” he thought. The sky was slightly gray and, yes, he expected rain, but maybe PEMA was being extra cautious because of the tropical depression in late 2004.

On April 2, 2005, Don gazed out the window of his Delaware River bungalow as it began raining softly. To his surprise the river started rising immediately—and steadily. He felt safe, however, because his home is elevated eight feet above grade.

Don had minor water damage to his furnace and electric meter, which are at grade. He bought the house five years ago, already elevated. He plans to renovate, moving the furnace and meter above grade and reserving the space under his house for just his car and storage. An architect, Don is still considering how to build partitions between the existing support columns that will allow floodwaters to flow through. Disaster officials suggested Flood Vents in the walls to manage the flow and Don is considering that option. Don’s flood insurance covers damage to the house, including the furnace. He registered with FEMA and received rental assistance for lodging until repairs to his electrical system and furnace can be made.

Don Menke's only damage from the April flood was to his furnace and electric meter.

“One of the most effective ways to prevent future flood damage is to elevate your home above the flood level,” said Commonwealth Coordinating Officer Adrian R. King Jr. “Mr. Menke’s case is a testament to the effectiveness of home elevation for mitigation.”

Federal Coordinating Officer Tom Davies added, “Using mitigation techniques is not only wise in terms of money saved on repairs and other losses, but it decreases stress and displacement. It is an important aspect of disaster preparedness.”

As of July 2006, Mr. Menke has not yet reached his goal of elevating the furnace and electric meter, though he did gain the necessary permission from the electric company to raise the meter to a significantly higher elevation. Additionally, the possibility of fuel oil leaking was eliminated by anchoring the fuel tank.



**Bucks County,  
Pennsylvania**



### **Quick Facts**

Sector:

**Private**

Cost:

**Amount Not Available**

Primary Activity/Project:

**Elevation, Structural**

Primary Funding:

**Homeowner**