



FEMA

Rossilli's Restaurant Saved by an Inch of Prevention

Findlay, OH - Two days after the rampaging Blanchard River overflowed its banks last August and submerged downtown Findlay under more than a foot of water, Meg Rossilli stood in front of the restaurant she owns with her brother and her husband.

Located less than two blocks away from the bridge on Main Street that crosses over the river, Rossilli's Restaurant, like many of the stores and offices in the neighborhood, could have sustained major, even bankrupting, damages from the 100-year flood.

In this case, the difference between disaster and setback was a matter of a single inch.

"When we moved to our new location (in 2003), we wanted to raise up the dining room floor by a foot," says Meg's brother and co-owner, Gary. The contractor and the city suggested raising the floor 13 inches instead of 12, in addition to using a more expensive, pressurized water-resistant wood. Being concerned with the additional cost for both modifications, they hesitated.

But ultimately they decided to play it safe and spend the money not only on the extra height, but also on the pressurized water-resistant wood, in both the dining room and the kitchen in the back.

Four years later, a summer storm settled over northwest Ohio, dumping up to 9 inches of rain in a single day on the farms and small towns. Creeks, streams, drainage systems, rivers – they all overflowed in the predominantly flat region.

Down Main Street from the river, the Rossillis and Mike Eynon, Meg's husband and business partner, piled sandbags three feet high in the narrow alcove of their entrance. Flood waters came in anyway, and the bar area in the front got flooded.

Flood water crept up the ramp to the dining room, but stopped less than an inch from the raised floor.



Hancock County,
Ohio



Quick Facts

Sector:

Private

Cost:

Amount Not Available

Primary Activity/Project:

Retrofitting, Non-structural

Primary Funding:

Property Owner, Commercial