

Rosenberg family home for the holidays – and prepared for future hurricanes

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AUSTIN, Texas – A Houston-area mom is sharing her Hurricane Harvey recovery story this holiday season, along with the importance of always being prepared for flood events.

Rosenberg resident Rose Pickens' family home flooded twice in the last few years, starting with the Memorial Day flood in May 2016. Then, during Harvey in August 2017, three inches of flood water was all it took to ruin her floors, subfloors and sheetrock throughout the house.

Pickens decided to mitigate against future flooding. She met with an engineer and made plans to elevate her home 10 feet above grade. Part of the process of raising her home included meeting with a local contractor in order to pour concrete pilings to elevate nearly 7 feet above base flood elevation.

“The biggest benefit is knowing we will not flood again,” says Pickens of her elevated home, noting how tough it was to go through two floods. “It’s going to give my kids a sense of peace knowing that they’ll have something structurally strong enough to last until they’re ready to have children and grandchildren.”

In addition to considering a home elevation, Pickens has additional advice on what Texans can do to prepare themselves for flooding events, even outside of hurricane season.



“Take heed of the warnings that your city and county leaders are giving you,” she says. ‘Know when and how to evacuate and know what paperwork to bring with you.’ And, she says, “Definitely invest in getting some flood insurance.”

The Pickens family lived in a FEMA-provided hotel for two months after Harvey while their home was returned to habitable conditions. They later moved into a temporary home unit provided through the Texas General Land Office while their home was being elevated.

This holiday season, Pickens is back in her home and in the spirit of the season she is giving back. “We are looking at not just preparing ourselves, but our neighbors as well. I’m currently working with other homeowners that needed their homes to be elevated. I’m working with them on the application process of the homeowners assistance program as well as the reimbursement program.”

Rose has some final words of advice for her neighbors. She says the process can take time. “Don’t give up, it is so worth it in the end.”

To watch a video about Pickens’ recovery, visit www.youtube.com/watch?v=fSz5g9PvoZQ&feature=youtu.be or www.facebook.com/FEMAHarvey.

For additional information about Hurricane Harvey and Texas recovery, visit the Hurricane Harvey disaster web page at www.fema.gov/disaster/4332, Facebook at www.facebook.com/FEMAHarvey, the FEMA Region 6 Twitter account at www.twitter.com/FEMARegion6 or the Texas Division of Emergency Management website at <https://tdem.texas.gov>.



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