

# Coastal Construction Fact Sheet Series

HOME BUILDER'S GUIDE TO COASTAL CONSTRUCTION

Technical Fact Sheet No. G.1

GUIDE  
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## Introduction

FEMA has produced a series of 37 fact sheets that provide technical guidance and recommendations concerning the construction of **coastal residential buildings**. The fact sheets present information aimed at improving the performance of buildings subject to flood and wind forces in coastal environments. The fact sheets make extensive use of photographs and drawings to illustrate National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) regulatory requirements, the proper siting of coastal buildings, and recommended design and construction practices, including structural connections, the building envelope, utilities, and accessory structures. In addition, many of the fact sheets include lists of additional resources that provide more information about the topics discussed.

## Available Fact Sheets

The following 37 fact sheets are also available on the FEMA website ([www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov)) as Adobe® Portable Document Format (PDF) files and as plain text (.txt) files. You must have Adobe® Reader to view the PDF files. The latest version of Adobe Reader is recommended. Download the free Reader from [www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com).

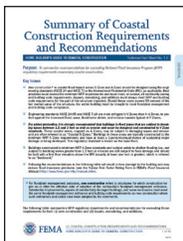
**Note:** The fact sheets have been divided into 10 different categories, which represent various building components or aspects of the construction process. Fact sheets are numbered first by the category and then followed by a number to represent the fact sheet within the category. Future updates to the guide will include fact sheets using these categories and will allow the user to add new fact sheets within the category without requiring the entire guide to be reprinted. Revisions to individual sheets will include a letter behind the numbers to represent each successive update.

## Category 1 – General



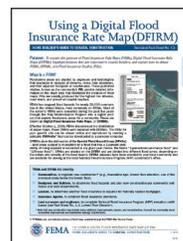
**Fact Sheet No. 1.1, Coastal Building Successes and Failures** – Explains how coastal construction requirements differ from those for inland construction, and discusses the characteristics that make for a successful coastal residential building. Includes

design and construction recommendations for achieving building success.



**Fact Sheet No. 1.2, Summary of Coastal Construction Requirements and Recommendations for Flood Effects** – Summarizes recommendations for exceeding NFIP regulatory requirements for new construction and for repairs, remodeling, and additions.

Topics include building foundations, enclosures below the Base Flood Elevation (BFE), use of nonstructural fill, use of space below the BFE, utilities, certification requirements, and repairs, remodeling, and additions. Cross-references to related fact sheets are provided.



**Fact Sheet No. 1.3, Using a Digital Flood Insurance Rate Map (DFIRM)** – Explains the purpose of Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) and Digital Flood Insurance Rate Maps (DFIRMs); highlights features that are important to coastal builders, including flood zones and flood elevations; and explains how to obtain FIRMs, DFIRMs, and Flood Insurance Studies (FISs).



**Fact Sheet No. 1.4, Lowest Floor Elevation** – Defines “lowest floor,” discusses benefits of exceeding the NFIP minimum building elevation requirements, identifies common construction practices that are violations of NFIP regulations, which result in significantly higher flood insurance premiums; and discusses the NFIP Elevation Certificate. Also includes a copy of the certificate.



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**Fact Sheet No. 1.5, V Zone Design Certification** – Explains the certification requirements for structural design and methods of construction in V Zones. Also includes a copy of a sample certificate and explains how to complete it.



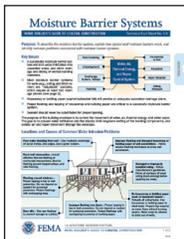
**Fact Sheet No. 1.6, Designing for Flood Levels Above the BFE** – Recommends design and construction practices that reduce the likelihood of flood damage in the event that flood levels exceed the BFE. It includes illustrations of appropriate construction practices and information on the insurance benefits of building above the BFE.



**Fact Sheet No. 1.7, Coastal Building Materials** – Provides guidance and best practices on the selection of building materials used for coastal construction. Flood, wind, corrosion, and decay resistance are discussed, including protection recommendations.

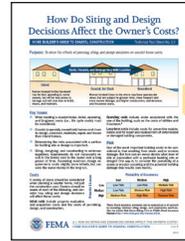


**Fact Sheet No. 1.8, Non-Traditional Building Materials and Systems** – Provides guidance on alternative building materials and techniques and their application in coastal environments. It includes discussions of Engineered Wood Products, Structural Insulated Panels, Insulating Concrete Forms, Prefabricated Shear Walls and Moment Frames, Sprayed Closed-Cell Foam Insulation, Advanced Wall Framing, and Modular Houses.



**Fact Sheet No. 1.9, Moisture Barrier Systems** – Describes the moisture barrier system, explains how typical wall moisture barrier systems work, and discusses common problems associated with moisture barrier systems.

## Category 2 – Planning



**Fact Sheet No. 2.1, How Do Siting and Design Decisions Affect the Owner's Costs?**– Discusses effects of planning, siting, and design decisions on coastal home costs. Topics include initial, operating, and long-term costs; risk determination; and the effect on costs of meeting and exceeding code and NFIP design and construction requirements.



**Fact Sheet No. 2.2, Selecting a Lot and Siting the Building**– Presents guidance concerning lot selection and building siting considerations for coastal residential buildings. Topics include factors that constrain siting decisions, coastal setback lines, common siting problems, and suggestions for builders, designers, and owners.

## Category 3 – Foundations



**Fact Sheet No. 3.1, Foundations in Coastal Areas**– Explains foundation design criteria and describes foundation types suitable for coastal environments. Also addresses foundations for high-elevation coastal areas (e.g., bluff areas).



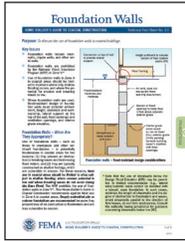
**Fact Sheet No. 3.2, Pile Design and Installation**– Presents basic information about pile design and installation, including pile types, sizes and lengths, layout, installation methods, bracing, field cutting, connections, and verifying capacities.



**Fact Sheet No. 3.3, Wood Pile-to-Beam Connections** – Illustrates typical wood-pile-to-beam connections; presents basic construction guidance for various connection methods, including connections for misaligned piles; and illustrates pile bracing connection techniques.



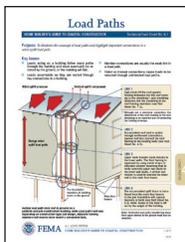
**Fact Sheet No. 3.4, Reinforced Masonry Pier Construction**— Provides an alternative to piles in V Zones and A Zones in coastal areas where soil properties preclude pile installation, but the need for an “open foundation system” still exists. Includes recommendations for good masonry practices in coastal environments.



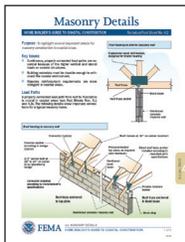
**Fact Sheet No. 3.5, Foundation Walls**— Discusses the use of foundation walls in coastal buildings. Topics include footing embedment, wall height, materials and workmanship, lateral support, flood openings and ventilation requirements, and interior grade elevations

for crawlspaces.

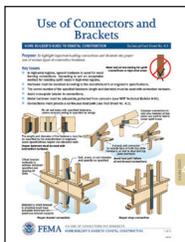
## Category 4 – Load Paths



**Fact Sheet No. 4.1, Load Paths**— Illustrates the concept of load paths and highlights important connections in a typical wind uplift load path.



**Fact Sheet No. 4.2, Masonry Details** – Illustrates important roof-to-wall and wall-to-foundation connection details for masonry construction in coastal areas. Topics include load paths, building materials, and reinforcement.



**Fact Sheet No. 4.3, Use of Connectors and Brackets**— Illustrates important building connections and the proper use of connection hardware throughout a building.

## Category 5 – Wall Systems



**Fact Sheet No. 5.1, Housewrap**— Explains the function of housewrap, examines its attributes, and addresses common problems associated with its use. Topics include housewrap vs. building paper and housewrap installation.



**Fact Sheet No. 5.2, Roof-to-Wall and Deck-to-Wall Flashing**— Emphasizes the importance of proper roof and deck flashing, and presents typical and enhanced flashing techniques for coastal homes.



**Fact Sheet No. 5.3, Siding Installation in High-Wind Regions**— Provides basic design and installation tips for various types of siding for high-wind regions, including vinyl, wood, and fiber cement and discusses sustainable design issues.



**Fact Sheet No. 5.4, Attachment of Brick Veneer in High-Wind Regions**— Provides recommended practices for installing brick veneer that will enhance wind resistance in high wind regions. Examples of proper installations and brick veneer tie spacings are provided.

## Category 6 - Openings

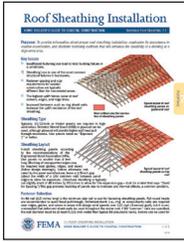


**Fact Sheet No. 6.1, Window and Door Installation**— Presents flashing detail concepts for window and door openings that provide adequate resistance to water intrusion in coastal environments, do not depend solely on sealants, are integral with secondary weather barriers (e.g., housewrap), and are adequately attached to the wall. Topics include the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) Standard E 2112 and specific considerations concerning pan flashings, Exterior Insulation Finishing Systems, frame anchoring, shutters, and weatherstripping.



**Fact Sheet No. 6.2, Protection of Openings – Shutters and Glazing**– Presents information about the selection and installation of storm shutters and impact-resistant glazing and other types of opening protection in windborne debris regions. Shutter types addressed include temporary plywood panels; temporary manufactured panels; permanent, manual closing; and permanent, motor-driven.

## Category 7 - Roofing



**Fact Sheet No. 7.1, Roof Sheathing Installation**– Presents information about proper roof sheathing installation and its importance in coastal construction; also discusses fastening methods that will enhance the durability of a building in a high-wind area. Topics include sheathing types and layout methods for gable-end and hip roofs, fastener selection and spacing, the treatment of ridge vents and ladder framing, and common sheathing attachment mistakes.



**Fact Sheet No. 7.2, Roof Underlayment for Asphalt Shingle Roofs**– Presents recommended practices for the use of roofing underlayment as an enhanced secondary water barrier in coastal environments. Optional installation methods are illustrated.



**Fact Sheet No. 7.3, Asphalt Shingle Roofing for High-Wind Regions**– Recommends practices for installing asphalt roof shingles that will enhance the wind resistance of roof coverings in high-wind, coastal regions. Issues include installation at hips, eaves, and ridges; shingle characteristics; weathering and durability; and wind resistance.



**Fact Sheet No. 7.4, Tile Roofing for High-Wind Areas**– Presents design and construction guidance for tile roofing attachment methods. Topics include uplift loads, uplift resistance, special considerations concerning tile attachment at

hips and ridges, tile installation on critical and essential buildings, and quality control.



**Fact Sheet No. 7.5, Minimizing Water Intrusion through Roof Vents in High-Wind Regions**– Describes practices for minimizing water intrusion through roof vent systems, which can lead to interior damage and mold growth in high-wind regions. Topics include soffit vents, ridge vents, gable end vents, off-ridge vents, gable rake vents, and turbines.



**Fact Sheet No. 7.6, Metal Roof Systems in High-Wind Regions**– Presents design and installation guidance for metal roofing systems that will enhance wind-resistance in high-wind regions. Discussions on sustainable design options are included.

## Category 8 - Attachments



**Fact Sheet No. 8.1, Enclosures and Breakaway Walls**– Discusses requirements and recommendations for enclosures and breakaway walls for their use below the BFE. It includes a diagram of a compliant wall system and examples of systems that have either resulted in increased damages or increased flood insurance premiums.



**Fact Sheet No. 8.2, Decks, Pools, and Accessory Structures**– Summarizes NFIP requirements, general guidelines, and recommendations concerning the construction and installation of decks, access stairs and elevators, swimming pools, and accessory buildings under or near coastal residential buildings.



**Fact Sheet No. 8.3, Protecting Utilities**– Identifies the special considerations that must be made when installing utility equipment, such as fuel, sewage, and water/sewage lines in a coastal home, and presents recommendations for utility protection.

## Category 9 - Repairs



**Fact Sheet No. 9.1, Repairs, Remodeling, Additions, and Retrofitting - Flood**– Outlines NFIP requirements for repairs, remodeling, and additions, and discusses opportunities for retrofitting in coastal flood hazard areas. Also presents recommendations for exceeding the minimum NFIP requirements. Definitions of “substantial damage” and “substantial improvement” are included.



**Fact Sheet No. 9.2, Repairs, Remodeling, Additions, and Retrofitting - Wind**– Outlines requirements and makes “best practice” recommendations for repairs, remodeling, and additions, and discusses opportunities for retrofitting in coastal high wind areas.

## Category G - Guide



**Fact Sheet No. G.1– Technical Fact Sheet Guide**



**Fact Sheet No. G.2, References and Resources**– Lists references that provide information relevant to topics covered by the *Home Builder's Guide to Coastal Construction* technical fact sheets.

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## FEMA P-499 Home Builder's Guide to Coastal Construction– 2005 to 2010 Crosswalk

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Developed in association with the National Association of Home Builders Research Center

