



FEMA

Galveston Neighborhood Gets High Marks in Hurricane Test

Galveston Island, TX - Hurricane Ike may have devastated most of Galveston, but one of the city’s newest neighborhoods – Evia – suffered only minor wind damage and developers say it is thanks to features in the town’s design.

Crystal Ruiz, who runs the neighborhood coffee shop, was filled with apprehension when she came back on the island a couple of weeks after the September 2008 storm. “When you drive into Galveston, you are hit by what happened here,” she said from the counter of the Sugar Bean Coffee and Cream. She said everything was damaged and described the scene with people dragging their belongings out of ruined homes.

“You drive past that big mountain of trash; you don’t know what you will find. You get to Evia, and it is beautiful! A couple of street signs were down. Some siding was missing. But the sun was shining, the grass was green, the lakes were sparkling, and the homes - even the little details like the gardens were spotless. It was fantastic!” said Ms. Ruiz.

It is no accident that the subdivision survived the storm so well. It was carefully planned to offer gracious living and classic design with structural integrity and sustainability.

The first new neighborhood in the city in three decades, Evia is named for Jose Antonio de Evia, an 18th Century Spaniard credited with discovering the island and naming it “Galveston” after his patron, Bernardo de Galvez.

Evia is what planners call a New Urbanist community. It’s a traditional, mixed-use neighborhood that echoes the past. Curving streets encourage neighbors to visit and walk or bike around. Pastel houses in Victorian, Craftsman, and classical designs are scattered across the landscape. The 361-lot, 93-acre subdivision is also a green, sustainable community, designed to protect the environment and to minimize disaster losses that are ultimately huge, wasteful burdens for the environment.

What helped the Evia neighborhood survive Hurricane Ike?



Galveston County, Texas



Quick Facts

Sector:

Private

Cost:

Amount Not Available

Primary Activity/Project:

Floodplain Management

Primary Funding:

Private funds