



FEMA

Moving from Harm's Way Pays Off Elevation Keeps Family Business Dry

Southampton, VA - For 30 years, Robert and Gale Stradley’s home escaped the intermittent threat of flooding. However, when Hurricane Floyd struck in September 1999, the couple was not so lucky. “Floyd was a very, very different storm. It dumped an unbelievable amount of water on us and then the wind just held the water in,” remembered Gale Stradley.

Gail Stradley and her husband stayed with friends while they waited for Floyd’s floodwaters to recede. “The water came up above our windows and our house sat in water for seven long days,” she said. “It was a scary picture. We lost every single thing, and my husband’s business was [run] out of our house.”

With the help of FEMA grants for temporary housing and a low-interest loan from the U.S. Small Business Administration through their own bank, the Stradleys were able to rebuild and elevate their home, moving it out of harm’s way.

“We never wanted to go through that again,” Stradley said. She added that the mitigation measure to elevate their home resulted in a reduction of the retired couple’s flood insurance premiums. “Thanks to the government’s help, we’re still independent and living in our own home.”

“I can’t say enough about what the people at FEMA did for us,” she continued. “There was a woman from New York State named Rosa and she was so wonderful, she walked us through every last thing we had to do [to receive FEMA assistance]. I can’t say enough about the help we received,” Stradley declared.

Unfortunately, not all the residents and businesses in the Stradleys’ community were protected from Hurricane Isabel when it hit the area in September 2003. “I feel so badly for those folks. If you don’t think they were sweating this one...” her voice trailed. “It was bad.”

How did the couple fare during Hurricane Isabel? “Just fine,” said Gale Stradley. “We had debris in our yard but our house and possessions stayed safe and dry.”



Franklin City,
Virginia



Quick Facts

Sector:

Private

Cost:

Amount Not Available

Primary Activity/Project:

Elevation, Structural

Primary Funding:

Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)