

Talk with FEMA Mitigation Specialists - Get Tips as You Repair Your Home

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There's no way to be ready for everything, but survival isn't about luck. It's about preparing for difficult situations ahead of time. FEMA specialists are available by phone to discuss your needs as you look ahead to next year's hurricane season.

While you recover from this year's damage, you can rebuild stronger, smarter, safer and better, with more resilience. This process is called "mitigation." There is a wide range of options for protecting your home from flood and wind events through mitigation.

Louisiana residents with homes affected by this year's hurricanes can get helpful advice from a specialist on the FEMA Mitigation Helpline at 833-FEMA-4-US. Lines are open Monday through Saturday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Specialists are available as well by email at FEMA-LAMit@fema.dhs.gov.

Your discussion with a FEMA Mitigation specialist will get you started in planning for repairs. As work progresses, experts are available to provide rebuilding tips, advise on building supplies, explain the importance of flood insurance and help you make a personal disaster plan.

Mitigation reduces a property's risk to future events, and it allows residents to return home more quickly, with less damage, after the next storm. While it may involve a larger initial investment, mitigation pays off in the long run. In fact, estimates are that on average for every dollar spent on mitigation, six are saved from future losses.

Things you may want to consider:

- Elevate (move up higher) or flood-proof your washer, dryer, water heater and HVAC systems. If possible, move these appliances out of your basement to the second floor.
- Relocate electrical outlets to three feet above the floor.



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- Install a backflow valve in the sewer line. (Very important – insurance will generally not cover sewer backflow.)
- Seal your basement walls with waterproofing compounds.
- Elevate the exterior air conditioning compressor 2-3 feet.

Select a licensed contractor. Be sure to get a written estimate and verify the company's references with the Better Business Bureau or your state and local officials. Pay by check or credit card.

Contact your local building official before rebuilding/renovating /retrofitting. Make sure your plans meet local and state government requirements. Get proper permits.

Protect your investment in your home by purchasing flood insurance, even if you do not live in a high-risk flood zone. FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) helps cover costly losses associated with flooding. For more information, visit <https://www.floodsmart.com/> or for residents to find useful publications visit <https://fema.connectsolutions.com/lamit/>.

