

Building Safety Month: Take Action to Protect Your Home

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CHICAGO – May is Building Safety Month, and this year’s campaign, “Safety for All: Building Codes in Action,” raises awareness about the importance of building codes to ensure safety in the spaces in which we live, work and learn.

“Resilient communities require a commitment to strong building standards,” said Tom Sivak, regional administrator, FEMA Region 5. “We can all do our part. Start by verifying your local government has adopted up-to-date building safety codes and get proper permits before beginning any home repair or improvement projects.”

Disasters in the Midwest range from floods to severe storms, tornadoes and even earthquakes. Taking steps to reinforce your home can be essential to reducing the risks of damage those disasters could cause:

1. **Elevate and anchor utilities.** Elevate and anchor your critical utilities, including electrical panels, propane tanks, sockets, wiring, appliances, and heating systems to reduce the risk of flood waters damaging them.
2. **Waterproof your basement.** Install a water alarm and maintain a working sump pump to protect your basement. Install a battery-operated backup pump in case of power failure. Consider also installing a back-flow valve, to push the flow of water & sewer backup away from your property.
3. **Secure outdoor items.** Secure lawn furniture and any other loose outdoor items that may become windborne and cause injury or damage during high-wind events.
4. **Protect windows during high-wind events.** Storm shutters prevent windows from breaking when there is windborne debris. You can also add shatter-resistant film or stormproof high-impact glass to reduce the risks of glass breaking.
5. **Fortify your roof.** Re-adhere any loose shingles and consider impact-resistant shingles when installing a roof. Install roof strappings to anchor the roof framing to the wall framings so the wind can’t lift your roof off your



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house.

6. **Take advantage of insurance incentives.** Many insurance policies offer financial incentives for risk reduction measures. For example, the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) pays up to \$1,000 each for loss avoidance measures and property moved to safety. Call your insurance agent for more information about benefits that may be available to you.

For more information about Building Safety Month or ways to increase awareness about building safety visit [2022 Building Safety Month - ICC \(iccsafe.org\)](https://www.iccsafe.org). Learn even more about how to prepare before a disaster strikes, by visiting www.Ready.gov.

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