

NEWS FROM THE DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL

Bethany Beach Properties Qualify for Reduced Flood Insurance Rates

Flood insurance just got more affordable for property owners in Bethany Beach. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) approved a 10 percent rate reduction on the cost of flood insurance for all properties in the town. The town of Bethany Beach received the National Flood Insurance Program rate reduction for implementing measures aimed at reducing property damage caused by flooding and increasing public awareness of flood risk.

Bethany Beach received a Class 8 rating on the National Flood Insurance Program's Community Rating System and qualified for the reduced rate. The Community Rating System is a voluntary incentive program that recognizes community floodplain management activities that exceed the minimum program requirements.

To qualify for the new rating, Bethany Beach worked with FEMA and DNREC and implemented new building construction code requirements and stormwater runoff standards that will help reduce property damage from flooding. In addition, the town increased flood reduction outreach and education efforts to property owners.

FEMA estimates that roughly 2,000 policyholders in the town will each receive an average discount of \$55 per year – amounting to an approximate annual savings of \$111,000 per year for the entire town.

Beginning this month, all Bethany Beach federal flood insurance policyholders will receive the rate reduction when their policies renew. Property owners without current flood insurance are encouraged to contact their insurance agent. New policies require a 30-day waiting period before coverage will take effect.

According to Michael Powell, program manager with DNREC's Shoreline and Waterway Management Section, the agency helps communities meet and comply with federal and local floodplain requirements and provides training on the risks of flooding.

"Year in and year out, flooding is the leading cause of property loss from natural disasters in this country," said Powell. "We are pleased that Bethany Beach has qualified for this program that will make flood insurance more affordable. With hurricane season approaching, we encourage property owners to protect their properties and invest in flood insurance coverage."

For more information or questions, please contact John Eckrich, Bethany Beach Building Inspector, at 302-539-8780.