

ARE YOU IN OR OUT?

Determining your true flood risk



◆ Most homeowners may refer to their home as being “in” or “out” of a flood zone. But, in reality, every home is at risk of flooding. In fact, according to FEMA, 98 percent of US counties have flooded.

◆ There are three best practices to determining flood risk. Keep in mind:

1. The limits of your coverage.

If a mortgage company requires a homeowner to purchase flood insurance coverage, they normally will only require the homeowner to carry the loan amount, which oftentimes may fall short of the true value of the home. Work with an insurance agent to secure coverage for a home so that there are enough funds to make mortgage payments and have startup funds for repair.

2. Your proximity to a flood zone.

It's not uncommon for a house to be determined to be “out” of a flood zone but, upon closer examination of a flood zone map, to actually be mere feet past the flood boundary. When that is the case, a homeowner's true flood risk jumps.

3. How changing flood maps change your risk

The accuracy of the flood maps produced by FEMA is a constant topic of conversation. Indeed, it is very difficult to keep up with changing land use and construction projects to keep the flood maps current. The key for homeowners – and their insurance agents – to remember is that the flood maps developed years ago when a house was originally purchased don't necessarily hold true over time.

◆ Take a little time and look up your local flood map at <https://msc.fema.gov/portal>. It pays to know your risk!