



# TOWNSHIP OF TOMS RIVER

## DEPARTMENT OF ENGINEERING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

# MEMORANDUM

**To:** FEMA – 2014 CRS Recertification Package  
**From:** Robert J. Chankalian, PE, CME Township Engineer  
**Subject:** 2014 FEMA CRS - Progress Report  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 14, 2014  
**Copy To:** Township Website

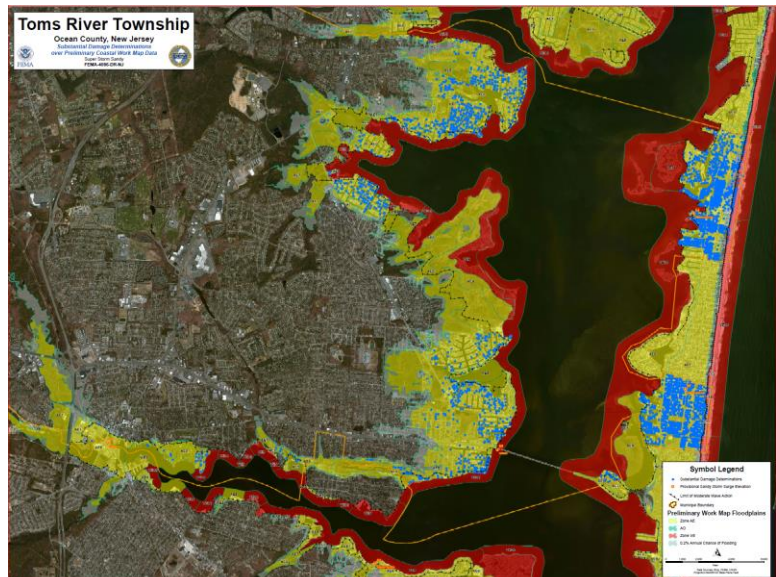
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### Update:

Toms River continues to have a substantial number of Repetitive Loss properties within its boundaries, which have increased since Hurricane Irene and Superstorm Sandy. As of the last Repetitive Loss (RL) report provided by FEMA in September of 2013, the amount of RL properties in Toms River has risen from 109 to 451.

However, following the preparation of Toms River's Severe Repetitive Loss Analysis 3 years ago, and after the two recent major storms, we have had over 4,000 homes declared substantially damaged (SD). As part of the ongoing rebuilding process, Toms River is strictly enforcing its floodplain management regulations to ensure all SD properties are brought into code compliance.

These storms, although tragic in their immediate effect on the Township, are a catalyst for upgrading of the flood prone



housing stock. As shown in the table below, you can see the immediate positive impact on a significant amount of flood prone homes within the Township:

The following is a summary of permits issued since late 2012:

<b>Dwelling Units Demolished:</b>	<b>1,500+</b>
<b>Elevation Permits Issued:</b>	<b>370+</b>
<b>New Dwelling Permits Issued:</b>	<b>980+</b>
<b>Homes Approved for RREM Program:</b>	<b>1,000</b>
<b>Homes in second round of RREM Program:</b>	<b>1,400</b>

As such, with approximately 4,000 SD homes required to be mitigated, when you consider the 1,500 demolished homes, and 370 elevation permits issued, Toms River has approximately 37% of the Substantially Damaged Properties already under mitigation. If you consider the 980 new home & 370 elevation permits issued, and 1,000 approved RREM properties, that brings the total closer to 60% of SD properties on track to be mitigated. Lastly, if you anticipate the second round of RREM; 1,400 properties added to the 980 new home & 370 elevation permits issued, and 1,000 approved RREM properties, that brings the total to almost 94% of SD properties mitigated.<sup>1</sup>

### **Steps Taken to Minimize Flood Impact:**

#### ***Public Awareness***

Most of Toms River's SRL properties are post war, pre FIRM construction on the barrier island. Toms River has made several improvements in its efforts to increase public awareness of the Flood Insurance Rate Program in the last few years to remedy this. The Township has invested in an upgraded website and a GIS system to help it maintain, monitor and inform the public. Superstorm Sandy publicity has also had a huge impact on the public's awareness of these regulations.

The website provides an informational news letter available 24/7 as a supplement to the mailing notification that takes place once a year with the tax bill mailing. In addition, the Township has added a link to the FEMA "What's my BFE" website where residents can perform their own flood zone determinations. The website also has numerous flood regulation information updates.

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<sup>1</sup> The percentages assume that the permits issued are, in majority, for substantially damaged homes. It should be noted that some homes that decided to mitigate may not have been substantially damaged.

The GIS mapping software has allowed us to more easily locate and analyze SRL properties and properties in their vicinity. Eventually, the Township plans on providing a web based version of the GIS so that residents, realtors, attorneys and other professionals can more easily access flood zone information.

Toms River Township hired a Storm Recovery Ombudsman, Mr. Trevor Newman, right after Superstorm Sandy, who attends various meetings with communities, personal meetings with residents etc. Mr. Newman has vast knowledge in both the FEMA regulations, construction and the insurance process. The Ombudsman provides daily flood insurance, and flood regulation information, to the public. Since the storm, and presumably until the rebuilding process is completed, the Ombudsman provides an almost daily public outreach.

With regard to future mitigation, it is the Township's understanding that the County is working on a Flood Hazard Mitigation Plan. In the meantime, Toms River did prepare a Severe Repetitive Loss Analysis. It is Tom's Rivers intent to adopt the County's approved plan once it is finalized.

### ***Physical Improvements***

One of our most promising mitigating factor to reduce flooding is the ACoE Dune project which is now slated to begin the in the spring of 2015. However, due to the relatively low elevation of the barrier island and the Bay front areas, Toms River does what it can to reduce flooding events.

Previously Toms River Township was installing flood valves on outfall pipes. This however turned out to have a minimal effect in the lower lying areas, as rising waters not only backflow through pipes, but also migrate through the sandy soils.

As such, we have begun flood studies of several low lying roads and have already begun design for the elevation of one of the Township's lower elevation streets. This seems to be the only sure way to alleviate the nuisance flooding and to ensure the emergency vehicles have the best chance to traverse a roadway during a flood.

At some point however, due to the naturally low terrain and the proximity to the Ocean and Bay, we must solely rely on elevated construction to minimize flood damage. The building department does require compliance with the NJDEP Flood Hazard and CAFRA rules, which mandate the first floor

to be 12" minimum above the 100 year BFE. We began enforcing the ABFE maps, the preliminary working maps, and currently the PFIRMS, immediately upon direction by the State NJDEP.