



Parish of Ascension

OFFICE OF THE PARISH PRESIDENT

KENNY MATASSA
Parish President

Ascension Parish Officials Urge Residents to Secure Flood Insurance

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GONZALES – Ascension Parish President Kenny Matassa is reminding parish residents, now is the best time to buy flood insurance.

“Every resident and business owner in Ascension Parish is at some level of flood risk,” President Matassa said. “Flood insurance is available to help reduce the financial impact of a flood whether your building is in a high flood risk area, also known as the Special Flood Hazard Area, or not.”

Marcia Shivers, parish floodplain coordinator and committee member with the Capital Region Area Floodplain Taskforce (CRAFT), said sources of flooding include riverine dwellings, or having a dwelling beside a river, flash flooding following a heavy rain, ponding related to drainage issues, backwater flooding, urban flooding, and hurricane storm surges.

“Just a few inches of flood water can cause tens of thousands of dollars in damage to your home or business and nearly 20 percent of flood insurance claims come from moderate to low risk areas (or outside of high risk areas),” Shivers said.

While most disasters are covered under a standard homeowner’s policy, flooding is not, Shivers said. “And remember, there’s a 30-day waiting period from the date of purchase before your policy goes into effect. Therefore, now is the best time to buy flood insurance.”

Shivers said CRAFT is made up of officials from Ascension Parish, East Baton Rouge Parish, West Baton Rouge Parish, the City of Central, the City of Denham Springs, the City of Gonzales, the City of Walker, and the City of Zachary.

These communities meet regularly to discuss the Community Rating System (CRS) which is a voluntary program that offers incentives to help in reducing flood insurance premiums for their residents.

The CRAFT communities participate in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), enforce floodplain management activities that reduce flood damage, support the NFIP, and support a comprehensive approach to floodplain management.

According to CRAFT, flood insurance claims are paid even when federal disaster assistance is not available. The costs of flood policies vary depending on how much insurance is purchased, what it covers and the property's flood risk. Ascension Parish currently carries a flood insurance rating of 8 which translates to a 10 percent discount for all flood insurance policies being issued in our parish.

Shivers said more information is available by contacting a licensed insurance agent, or by visiting the NFIP official website at <https://www.floodsmart.gov/floodsmart>.

“Please protect your property and get covered today,” said President Matassa.

PHOTO CUTLINE – Only the top half of a fire hydrant on East Silverleaf Street in Gonzales was visible indicating how much the water level had risen during a heavy rain event that hit the parish and surrounding area in May of 2014.