



COMMUNITY RATING SYSTEM – CRS 2023

Procedure for the Handling of Certificates

Community
No. 345297

This procedure is a guide for **Elevation Certificate** and all other floodplain-related construction certificates (especially those required by the CRS). The purpose of this is to fully document the **Borough of Highland's** procedures in collection review, correction approval and storage of these certificates is maintained and to formalize procedures, so they are followed by all staff appropriately. The **Elevation Certificate** shall be used to determine if the proposed improvements/design is in compliance with Highlands Borough Chapter 21 Zoning & Land Use Regulations, (Flood Damage Prevention), Article XXIV ([Floodplain Management Regulations of Borough of Highlands](#)), 0-22-11, June 15, 2022.

Review of **Elevation Certificates** and all other floodplain-related construction certificates required including, but not limited to, Floodproofing Certificates, V Zone Certificates and Engineered Opening Certificates. These procedures outline the types of certificates required, the collection and review of all certificates, how corrections should be made, where the certificates are stored/archived and how we make these certificates available to the general public.

The **Borough of Highlands Department of Buildings & Housing (Department)** is responsible for the administration of all development issues within the **Borough of Highlands** including permitting, inspection, and review of all construction along with the creation of and maintenance of all building permit files and administrative documents (ordinances, building guides, applications, forms, outreach materials, etc.) related to building and development. The **Department** conducts all construction permit and plan reviews regulated by the Uniform Construction Code and all floodplain permit and plan reviews regulated by the Borough's Floodplain Regulations and performs all required inspections.

ALL CERTIFICATES ARE REQUIRED TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS & HOUSING AND APPROVED BY THE FLOODPLAIN ADMINISTRATOR PRIOR TO THE ISSUANCE OF A CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY

TYPES OF CERTIFICATES REQUIRED

All new construction, substantial improvements and repair for a substantially damaged buildings conducted in the **Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHA)**, which is the entire land area from and including **Shore Drive to Sandy Hook Bay, Shrewsbury and Navesink Rivers**, requires an **Elevation Certificate**. The **Department** shall require any of the following floodplain-related certificates that are appropriate for the development:

1. **Elevation Certificate**
2. **V Zone Design Certificate**
3. **Engineered Opening Certificate**
4. **Floodproofing Certificate for Non-Residential Structures**
5. **Floodproofing Certificate for Residential Basement**

ELEVATION CERTIFICATES - WHEN REQUIRED

An **Elevation Certificate** is required on all Residential and Non-Residential structures in the **SFHA** as follows:

1. **NEW CONSTRUCTION:**
 - a. After the foundation is built, an **Elevation Certificate** shall be submitted **prior to any further construction**. This will document the elevation of surrounding grades and the lowest floor to ensure they comply with the approved plans before further construction is allowed.
 - b. Upon completion of all construction and all adjacent grading is finalized, a complete and correct **"Finished Construction" Elevation Certificate** must be submitted by the applicant to show the as-built characteristic of the building.

- i. A “**Finished Construction**” **Elevation Certificate** must be received, reviewed and corrected (if necessary) before a **Certificate of Occupancy** is issued.
2. **SUBSTANTIAL IMPROVEMENTS:**
 - a. An improvement that is determined to be a “*substantial improvement*” shall require an **Elevation Certificate** at the time of filing for a construction permit. This will be used to confirm that the submitted plans are showing compliance with the Uniform Construction Code and the floodplain regulations.
 - b. Upon completion of all construction and all adjacent grade is finalized, a complete and correct “**Finished Construction**” **Elevation Certificate** must be submitted by the applicant to show the as-built characteristic of the building.
 3. **SUBSTANTIAL DAMAGE:**
 - a. An improvement that is determined to be a “*substantial improvement*” shall require an **Elevation Certificate** at the time of filing for a construction permit. This will be used to confirm that the submitted plans are showing compliance with the Uniform Construction Code and the floodplain regulations.
 - b. Upon completion of all construction and all adjacent grade is finalized, a complete and correct “**Finished Construction**” **Elevation Certificate** must be submitted by the applicant to show the as-built characteristic of the building.

ELEVATION CERTIFICATES ARE REQUIRED TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS & HOUSING AND APPROVED BY THE FLOODPLAIN ADMINISTRATOR PRIOR TO THE ISSUANCE OF A CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY

V ZONE DESIGN CERTIFICATE - WHEN REQUIRED

An **V Zone design Certificate** is required on all structures in the **SFHA** as follows:

1. A **V Zone Design certificate** is required for all new construction and substantial improvements/substantial damage within an identified **V Zone (high hazard zone)** on Highlands FIRM.
 - a. **V Zone Certificate** is required before granting the initial building permit as it certifies the structural design and the proposed methods of construction for the building.
 - b. A complete and correct **Elevation Certificate** is also required once construction is finished.
 - c. At minimum, all permit files should contain both the **pre-construction V Zone Design Certificate** and the **finished Construction Elevation Certificates** for all new construction and substantial improvement/substantial damage in Highlands **V Zones**.

BREAKAWAY WALL CERTIFICATE - WHEN REQUIRED

A **Breakaway Wall Certification** is required on all structures in the **SFHA** as follows:

1. A **Breakaway Wall Certification** is required by a licensed design professional anytime a Breakaway Wall is designed into the construction. Breakaway Walls are required in all **V** and **Coastal A Zones**.

ENGINEERED FLOOD OPENING CERTIFICATE - WHEN REQUIRED

An **Engineered Flood Opening Certificate** is required on all structures in the **SFHA** as follows:

1. When **Engineered Flood Openings** are installed in the foundation of a building and the EC indicates that they were installed (Sections A8d and A9d on the **Elevation Certificate**), an **Engineered Opening Certificate** is required to be submitted with the **Elevation Certificate** to help verify compliance and the insurance rate.
 - a. Developer submits either the International Code Council* Evaluation Service (ICC-ES) form for the engineered opening or an individual certification.

- b. Individual certifications must cover the following at minimum:
 - i. Must identify the building (address) with the installed engineered openings.
 - ii. Design professional’s name, title, address, type of license, the state issuing the license, signature and seal.
 - iii. Statement certifying the design of the opening will automatically equalize hydrostatic flood loads on exterior walls by allowing for the automatic entry and exit of floodwaters.
 - iv. Description of the range of flood characteristics tested or computed for which the certification is valid, such as rates of rise and fall of floodwaters.

FLOODPROOFING CERTIFICATE - WHEN REQUIRED

A **Floodproofing Certificate** is required on all structures in the SFHA as follows:

1. **Non-Residential Structures - New construction and substantial improvements:**
 - a. A complete and correct **Floodproofing Certificate** is required to be submitted to the Building Department once construction is finished on the building and prior to issuing a **Certificate of Occupancy**.
 - b. An **Elevation Certificate** is required for a floodproofed non-residential building in order to determine the Base Flood Elevation.
2. **Residential Structures Basement**
 - a. A **Floodproofing Certificate** is required for a building with a basement that is floodproofed.
 - b. An **Elevation Certificate** is also required to help verify compliance with **Floodplain Management Regulations of Borough of Highlands**.
 - c. A complete and correct **Floodproofing Certificate** is required to be submitted to the **Department** once construction is finished on the building prior to issuing a **Certificate of Occupancy**.

WHAT DEPARTMENT COLLECTS AND REVIEWS CERTIFICATES

All Finished Construction **Elevation Certificates** shall be submitted to the **Department** for tracking and review. The Technical Assistant to the Construction Official logs the **Elevation Certificate** in our tracking system, and forwarded to the Floodplain Administrator, who reviews the **Elevation Certificate** and all supporting documentation for compliance, along with all other required certificates, to ensure all applicable building and development ordinances and standards are met. Upon determination that compliance is achieved, the Floodplain Administrator approves the **Floodplain Development Permit**. The **Certificate of Occupancy** (or final permit approval) will not be issued until all problems with an **Elevation Certificate** and supporting documentation are resolved.

HOW CERTIFICATES ARE CORRECTED

The Floodplain Administrator should consult the CRS **Elevation Certificate Checklist** when reviewing an **Elevation Certificate** to ensure all required fields are completed correctly. When an error is noticed on an **Elevation Certificate**, there are three ways to correct it:

1. For any inaccurate or incomplete information in Section C2, the Floodplain Administrator should request a new certificate from the applicant or their representative (surveyor/engineer/architect) who certified the form.
2. If incomplete or inaccurate information is found in the other sections, the Floodplain Administrator can do the following. As a general rule, and as law in some states, the local official SHOULD NOT mark up a signed and sealed form.
 - a. The forms may be returned to the applicant (or their representative) with instructions on what needs to be changed or corrected;

- b. The Floodplain Administrator can prepare a separate memo with the correct information and attach the Memo of Correction. When the certificate is provided to an inquirer, the memo must be included with it; or
- c. The Floodplain Administrator can note the changes or corrections in Section G.

All “Finished Construction” **Elevation Certificates** which had errors on them should be returned to the applicant within (10 business days) for immediate correction. In no case shall we accept a “Finished Construction” **Elevation Certificates** until all corrections deemed appropriate by the Floodplain Administrator are addressed. In no case shall a **Certificate of Occupancy** be issued until the Floodplain Administrator and Construction Official have all approved the permit. If corrections are completed after the **Certificate of Occupancy**, the Floodplain Administrator must ensure the homeowner receives a copy of the corrected **Elevation Certificate**.

HOW AND WHERE THE CERTIFICATES ARE MAINTAINED

All **Elevation Certificates** and all required construction certificates, as well as all other permit application documentation shall be stored within the Construction Permit Application folder (UCC Form F-100) in the office of the Highlands Department of Buildings & Housing, located at 151 Navesink Avenue, Highlands, NJ.

Elevation Certificates and all floodplain related documentation shall also be scanned at the time Uniform Construction Code files are scanned for storage/archiving.

Documents for work that does not require a construction permit, including “Finished Construction” **Elevation Certificates**, shall be filed and archived with, and in the same manner as Uniform Construction Code documents.

Elevation Certificates shall be uploaded into the **Forerunner** software system for each respective property for CRS “Activity 310” purposes. These **Elevation Certificates shall be accessible to the public by way of the public side of the Forerunner software system.**

HOW CERTIFICATES ARE MADE AVAILABLE TO INQUIRERS

When a member of the general public requests a copy of an **Elevation Certificate**, the request shall be initiated with the Technical Assistant to the Construction Official. The Technical Assistant shall act on the request immediately, if time allows, but shall have 3 business days to make a copy of the requested information and make the documentation available to the inquirer. There is no financial charge for this service.

Certificates and other SFHA documents are also available at no cost through Highlands’ Floodplain Management Software by [CLICKING HERE](#), or typing the following into a web browser:

<https://highlandsboroughnj.withforerunner.com/properties>

Approved by:

Steven J. Winters, CFM,
Construction Official, Floodplain Administrator