1. Open House Toolkit  
   Genesee County, New York

This toolkit includes messages and sample communication materials. You can use them to promote the Flood Risk and Insurance Open House in Genesee County. This event will discuss upcoming changes to the flood maps. You do not have to use these materials, but FEMA hopes they will help with your outreach efforts.

Community Open House Toolkit

This toolkit includes the following items:

* Objectives for the Flood Risk Open House meeting.
* News release.
* Public service announcement.
* Website story.
* Sample ad.
* Social media content.
* Talking points about the Open House.
* Frequently asked questions.

Objectives for the Flood Risk Open House Meeting

* Community members will meet one-on-one with FEMA, the New York Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), and county representatives.
* Community members will learn about:
  + The purpose, benefits and timeline of the mapping project.
  + The flood hazard zones on the new maps, and what they mean.
  + Local flood risks, and the resources that are available from the state, FEMA and other partners to reduce risk.
  + How map changes will affect the requirements for insurance and building.
  + The value of flood insurance and ways to obtain a policy.
  + The appeal and comment process.
  + The benefits of mitigation, as well as the cost and consequences of not acting.
  + What the county and state are doing to mitigate flood risk.
  + Where to go for updates and more information.

News Release

FEMA Issues a Revised Flood Insurance Rate Map for Genesee County, New York

*An Open House on flood risk and insurance is planned for May 15, 2025.*

GENESEE CO, New York — County, state and federal officials are working to reduce the effects of severe weather and natural disasters. On March 3, 2025, FEMA released a preliminary Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) for Genesee County for the public to see and comment on. The new map gives updated information about the community’s flood risk. The map also shows areas where flood insurance coverage may be required. The current maps for Genesee County (paper, not digital) were developed in the 1980s. Some areas of the preliminary FIRM show major flood hazard changes compared to the maps that are in effect now.

FEMA, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, and Genesee County officials invite residents to learn how they may be affected and what they can do to protect themselves. The Flood Risk and Insurance Open House will be held:

In person on

**Thursday, May 15, 2025**

**3 to 6:30 p.m. ET**

at:

**Genesee County Building #2**

**3837 West Main Street Road,**

**Batavia, NY 14020**

The Open House will not have a formal presentation. Residents can join at any time between 3 and 6:30 p.m. They can stay for any length of time. At this event, residents can talk one-on-one with FEMA representatives. They can learn more about their flood risk and potential changes to their flood insurance rates and requirements. If you already have flood insurance, please bring a copy of your declaration page. Residents can also see preliminary versions of the FIRM and the Flood Insurance Study (FIS) report [here](https://hazards.fema.gov/femaportal/prelimdownload/). They can use the [Old Paper Effective vs. New Digital Preliminary Data Viewer](https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/2493ae818ace41899db2568643e78e4f) to compare the new preliminary map to the older maps.

The last FIRM for Genesee County was a paper map from the 1980s. The new FIRM will be online, which will make them accessible to more residents. It will also help community members think about how to protect themselves from future flood events. The map and the FIS report are the basis for each community’s floodplain management regulations.

Due to these map changes, some properties in Genesee County may no longer be shown in the high-risk flood zone. This is known as the Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA). If a building is outside the SFHA on the new FIRM, flood insurance is not federally required. However, it is still recommended for both homeowners and renters.

Some properties may be shown in an SFHA for the first time. Those owners may need to buy flood insurance. Flooding is the number one natural disaster in the United States. Community members should know their current flood risk. This can help them use the tools and programs available to make their property and community safer.

Would you like to request a reasonable accommodation (sign language, real-time captioning or other)? Please email [Michael.Foley3@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:Michael.Foley3@fema.dhs.gov) or [FEMA-CivilRightsOffice@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:FEMA-CivilRightsOffice@fema.dhs.gov). You may also call FEMA’s Civil Rights Resource Line at (833) 285-7448.

To learn more or to see the flood maps, visit FEMA’s Flood Map Service Center at [msc.fema.gov](https://msc.fema.gov/portal/home). At [floodsmart.gov](http://www.floodsmart.gov), you can learn about flood insurance. You may also contact a map specialist at the FEMA Mapping and Insurance eXchange (FMIX) at (877) 336-2627 or [FEMA-FMIX@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:FEMA-FMIX@fema.dhs.gov).

For Open House questions, email our outreach lead, Rachel Wagner, at [rachel.wagner@associates.fema.dhs.gov](mailto:rachel.wagner@associates.fema.dhs.gov).

Sample Public Service Announcement

30 Seconds

Do you know your flood risk? If you live or work in Genesee County, you are invited to join FEMA’s upcoming Open House on flood risk and insurance. Here, you can learn more about your flood risk and the recently revised flood maps. FEMA representatives will be there to answer questions about flood risk, flood insurance, and ways to prepare for and protect against flooding. All are welcome to join.

An in-person Open House will be held from 3 to 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, May 15, 2025, at Genesee County Building #2, 3837 West Main Street Road, Batavia, NY 14020. Drop in for any amount of time.

15 Seconds

Do you know your flood risk? Get answers to your questions at FEMA’s Open House meeting on flood risk and insurance in Genesee County. An in-person meeting will take place on Thursday, May 15, 2025, at Genesee County Building #2, 3837 West Main Street Road, Batavia, NY 14020. Come any time from 3 to 6:30 p.m.

Sample Website Story

Do you know your flood risk? FEMA is hosting an Open House event on flood risk and insurance. If you live in Genesee County, this is a chance to learn more about your updated flood maps, known as Flood Insurance Rate Maps. FEMA representatives will be there to answer your questions. Learn about flood risk, flood insurance, and how to prepare for and protect yourself from flooding.

The Open House will be on Thursday, May 15, 2025, at Genesee County Building #2, 3837 West Main Street Road, Batavia, NY 14020. All are welcome to come to the Open House at any time from 3 to 6:30 p.m.

To request a reasonable accommodation (sign language, real-time captioning, or other), please email [Michael.Foley3@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:Michael.Foley3@fema.dhs.gov) or [FEMA-CivilRightsOffice@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:FEMA-CivilRightsOffice@fema.dhs.gov). You can also call FEMA’s Civil Rights Resource Line at (833) 285-7448.

Flooding is the number one natural disaster in the United States. People in our community need to know their risk and how to use the tools and programs they have, including flood insurance.

To learn more or to access the flood maps, visit <https://msc.fema.gov/portal/home>. You may also contact a map specialist at the FEMA Mapping and Insurance eXchange (FMIX) at (877) 336-2627 or [FEMA-FMIX@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:FEMA-FMIX@fema.dhs.gov).

Sample Advertisement

DO YOU KNOW YOUR FLOOD RISK?

Learn More at FEMA’s Open House on Flood Risk and Insurance

FEMA is hosting an Open House to talk to residents of Genesee County about the revised flood maps. Learn about your risk of flooding and any potential flood insurance changes. All are welcome to join.

FEMA’s Open Houses on Flood Risk and Insurance

In person on

**Thursday, May 15, 2025**

**3 to 6:30 p.m. ET**

at:

**Genesee County Building #2**

**3837 West Main Street Road,**

**Batavia, NY 14020**

FEMA representatives will be there to answer your questions. If you already have flood insurance, please bring your declaration page.

To learn more about your flood risk, visit <https://msc.fema.gov/portal/home>. If you can’t join the meeting, you can also contact a map specialist at the FEMA Mapping and Insurance eXchange (FMIX) at (877) 336-2627 or [FEMA-FMIX@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:FEMA-FMIX@fema.dhs.gov).

Social Media Posts for Facebook and X (Twitter)



Post as Soon as Possible

New flood maps for #GeneseeCountyNY communities are coming! Get your flood risk and flood insurance questions answered live by @FEMARegion2. Join the Open House at any time from 3 to 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, May 15, 2025, at Genesee County Building #2, 3837 West Main Street Road, Batavia, NY 14020. #KnowYourFloodRisk

Post on May 8 (or Earlier)

Genesee County residents: Ask FEMA your flood risk questions! @FEMARegion2 is holding an Open House on Thursday, May 15, 2025, at Genesee County Building #2, 3837 West Main Street Road, Batavia, NY 14020. You can stop by at any time from 3 to 6:30 p.m. #KnowYourFloodRisk

Post on May 15 - Morning

Tonight, join @FEMARegion2 for a #GeneseeCountyNY Open House on flood risk and insurance, any time from 3 to 6:30 p.m., to talk about the new flood maps, flood risk and insurance. The event will be held at Genesee County Building #2, 3837 West Main Street Road, Batavia, NY 14020. #KnowYourFloodRisk

Post After the Event

Thank you, #GeneseeCountyNY residents for joining the FEMA Open House on flood risk! Look up your #floodzone at <https://msc.fema.gov/portal/home> or call (877) 336-2627. Check out [http://www.floodsmart.gov](http://www.floodsmart.gov/) for safety and insurance tips. #floodsmart

Talking Points

Overarching Messages

* Residents and community members deserve to be informed. Everyone should know their risk and their role in reducing it.
* Through flood studies and updated maps, communities are getting more precise information about the flood risks where they live and work.
* Share this information with your friends and neighbors. Know your flood risk and have a plan before a flood or storm affects your community. Contact your local floodplain administrator. Visit <https://msc.fema.gov/portal/home>, <https://www.fema.gov/flood-insurance>, and [http://www.floodsmart.gov](http://www.floodsmart.gov/) to learn more about flood risk and how you can prepare for it.

Mapping Information

* FEMA’s Flood Map Service Center website is a great source of information. It includes all of FEMA’s flood maps and data. It also has fact sheets about flood insurance, Risk Mapping, Assessment and Planning, ways to reduce flood risk, and more.
* Map specialists at the FEMA Mapping and Insurance eXchange (FMIX) are also a great resource. You can reach them at (877) 336-2627 or [FEMA-FMIX@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:%20FEMA-FMIX@fema.dhs.gov).
* Search for mapping products at: <https://msc.fema.gov/portal/home>. It gives residents a way to view a specific location.
* Residents can compare the updated preliminary map to the old paper maps with the [Old Paper Effective vs. New Digital Preliminary Data Viewer](https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/2493ae818ace41899db2568643e78e4f).
* No matter what flood zone your property is in, you can buy flood insurance.

Flood Insurance

* Flood insurance requirements are based on the current effective Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM).
* Flood insurance is available through the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). This is a federally underwritten program. Licensed insurance agents provide the policies. To learn more, visit <https://www.fema.gov/flood-insurance> and [http://www.floodsmart.gov](http://www.floodsmart.gov/).
* The NFIP provides flood insurance in more than 22,000 communities across the Nation. These communities agree to adopt and enforce sound floodplain management regulations.
* FEMA recommends that all residents and business owners buy flood insurance to help protect their financial investments.
* Knowing where and when map changes will occur helps residents know their best insurance options. Find the preliminary FIRM at <https://msc.fema.gov/portal/home>.

Open House Frequently Asked Questions

What changes will we see on the new Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM)?

Some buildings may be shown in the high-risk area for the first time. This area is known as a Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA). Some buildings may no longer be shown in an SFHA.

* If a building is currently mapped in an SFHA but is shown outside the SFHA on the new FIRM, flood insurance will no longer be federally required. However, flood insurance is still recommended for both homeowners and renters.
* Mortgage companies or lenders may still require you to buy flood insurance.

Can I view my home on the new FIRM before the Open House?

Yes. You can look up an address on the preliminary map at <https://msc.fema.gov/fmcv>. You can also see how the updated maps compare to the old paper maps. Just use the [Old Paper Effective vs. New Digital Preliminary Data Viewer](https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/2493ae818ace41899db2568643e78e4f). Call the FEMA Mapping and Insurance eXchange (FMIX) at (877) 336-2627 to get specific details about your location.

Who should attend the Flood Risk Open House?

Everyone should attend a Flood Risk Open House! This is especially true if:

* Your property is currently mapped in an SFHA.
* Your property will soon be mapped in an SFHA.
* You have flood insurance now.
* You are not sure or want to learn more.

If you are not sure of your flood risk, you can view the preliminary FIRM at <https://msc.fema.gov/fmcv>. You can also call the FMIX at (877) 336-2627.

What happens at the Flood Risk Open House?

Property owners can meet one-on-one with FEMA representatives. They will discuss the preliminary FIRM and how their risk has changed. They can also ask questions about flood insurance.

Do I have to stay at the Open House for the entire time?

No. You can drop in at any time between the hours listed. Plan to spend about an hour there to get the details you need.

The Open House is set up so you can move between information stations. You may choose which stations or experts to visit.

What should a homeowner bring to the Flood Risk Open House?

Bring an address to learn more about a property’s flood risk. A current flood insurance policy or elevation certificate may provide more specific details about your flood insurance options.

Do I have to buy flood insurance?

The requirement for flood insurance is determined by the FIRM that is in effect.

* If the preliminary FIRM shows your property in an SFHA, and you have a mortgage through a government-backed lender:
  + You must buy flood insurance.
  + This is required once the FIRM goes into effect.
* There is time; updated maps are planned to go into effect in 2025.
* Wherever it rains, it can flood. Buying flood insurance is a good idea for any property owner or renter, even in low-risk areas.

Can I buy insurance at the Open House?

No. Flood insurance is available through the NFIP, a federally underwritten program. You can buy an NFIP policy through any state-licensed property and casualty insurance agent. A specialized agent can help you decide which insurance option is best for you. Find an agent at [FloodSmart.gov](http://www.floodsmart.gov/).

Can I change the new map?

You can formally appeal information that is on the new map. The Open House is a great place to learn more about the appeal process. This includes how to file an appeal or comment. If you can’t attend the Open House, your local floodplain manager’s office can help you find out more about comments or appeals. You can also learn more about the process [here](https://www.fema.gov/flood-maps/products-tools/know-your-risk/homeowners-renters).