

## Higher Standards

Higher standards can generally be defined as doing anything beyond FEMA's minimum floodplain regulation standards. For example, most communities in the NFIP regulate to the 100-Year flood level or Base Flood Elevation (BFE). Some regulate to a foot above the 100-Year level, some even to the 500, 500 + 1 foot, or even +2 feet. Adding a foot, or more, to the BFE would be a "higher standard". Do you want to know how many communities in Texas have adopted higher standards? Well, take a look at the TFMA website at: <https://www.tfma.org/page/documents-reports>. TFMA has been conducting a survey of Texas' communities adoption of higher standards since 2004 and again this year. The 2022 survey results tell us that:

- 29% (361) of NFIP communities in Texas responded to the Higher Standards Survey
- 82% (297) of responders require +1' or more Freeboard for new development
- 40% (144) of responders require Zone X Freeboard (elevated above Natural Ground and above the nearest street)
- 70% (253) of responders have community floodplain administrators that are CFM's

TFMA's Higher Standard Survey had been an annual occurrence but unfortunately did not occur in 2020-2021. TFMA's founder, Roy Sedwick, started the survey in 2004 along with Charlie Hastings, Kerr County Engineer. Our good friend John Ivey inherited it from them and faithfully conducted the survey for the last several years, but has now handed it off to Ben Pylant. Ben has had some excellent GIS assistance from Audrey Giesler on his staff at Halff Associates in Fort Worth. Our thanks to all of you for taking this on! Your dedication certainly sets a higher standard for us all!

Texas is the only state that does this survey, yet its results have been used both nationally and at the state level. Let's hope that the concept of adopting higher standards is becoming more widely accepted by Texas' communities as a viable alternative to reduce flood damage.