



INFORMATION ABOUT PROPERTY INSURANCE FOR A BUYER OR SELLER

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A. The availability and the affordability of property insurance may affect both the buyer and the seller.

Typically a buyer will seek to insure the property. Most mortgage lenders require that the property be insured in an amount not less than the loan amount. The failure to obtain property insurance at or before closing may delay the transaction or cause it to end, either of which can impose both inconvenience and cost to both the buyer and the seller.

B. There are a number of factors that affect the availability and affordability of insurance.

- (1) The level of coverage will significantly affect the cost of insurance. There are several levels of insurance coverage. For example:
 - (a) a policy may cover the replacement cost of the improvements and the replacement cost of many personal items in the property in the event of most casualties;
 - (b) a policy may cover only value of the improvements and exclude many casualties; or
 - (c) a policy may cover casualties and costs between the two noted extremes under (a) and (b).
- (2) Coverage levels and prices vary from company to company. There are many insurance companies conducting business in Texas who offer a variety of insurance products at various prices.
 - (a) One insurance company may refuse to insure a particular property or person while another insurance company may elect to do so.
 - (b) One insurance company may charge a significantly lower premium than another insurance company for the same or similar coverage.
 - (c) Generally, each insurance company has specific guidelines by which it prices its insurance policies. The following are examples of criteria that an insurance company may use in evaluating an application for insurance. The criteria vary from company to company.
 - (1) Past claims filed against the property to be insured in the 5 years preceding the application.
 - (2) Past claims filed by the applicant to be insured in the 5 years preceding the application.
 - (3) The applicant's insurance credit score.
 - (4) The past relationship between the insurance company and the applicant.
 - (5) The physical characteristics of the property such as condition, age, location, or construction materials.

C. Most insurance companies participate in the Comprehensive Loss Underwriting Exchange (CLUE) and obtain a CLUE report to evaluate the claims history of the property and the applicant.

- (1) Most insurance companies contribute information about claims to an insurance industry database known as CLUE (a registered trademark of Equifax, Inc.). An insurance company obtains a CLUE report when evaluating an application for insurance.
- (2) A CLUE report contains information about the claims history of the property and of the applicant for insurance.
 - (a) The CLUE report contains only data and does not inform the buyer or seller whether insurance is or is not available or at what cost.
 - (b) Insurance companies use the CLUE report in different ways.
 - (c) It is best to speak with an insurance agent with respect to how the information in a particular CLUE report affects the affordability and availability of insurance.

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- (3) While CLUE reports are generally accurate, there may be errors in the reports.
 - (a) An event may be listed as a claim even though the insurance company did not pay any proceeds (for example, the cost of repair did not exceed the deductible or an inquiry may be incorrectly classified as a claim).
 - (b) Federal law permits a person to challenge inaccurate information. One may contact the administrator of the CLUE report (Lexis-Nexis) to correct information in a CLUE report.
- (4) A property owner may, for a fee, obtain the CLUE report on his or her property through companies such as Lexis-Nexis (<https://personalreports.lexisnexis.com>, 1-866-312-9076), A-Plus (800-709-8842) or other companies, most of whose services are accessible via the Internet. An owner may also contact the Equifax Insurance Consumer Center at 800-456-6004.

D. Promptly after entering into a contract to buy a property in Texas, the buyer should take the following steps to avoid delays in closing and to avoid additional costs.


If the buyer has the option to terminate the contract, the buyer should make sure that the buyer and the insurance agent have completed the following steps before the option expires.

- (1) Contact one or more insurance agents.
 - (a) The buyer should discuss the various levels of coverage with an insurance agent and ask questions that are necessary so the buyer understands the levels of available coverage.
 - (b) Insurance agents can provide applicants with written summaries of the various coverage levels.
 - (c) Basic summaries are available at the websites noted in Paragraph E.
- (2) **Submit an application** for insurance with the insurance agent of the buyer's choice.
 - (a) Applying for insurance promptly after entering into a contract to buy a property helps avoid surprises or delays in closing the transaction.
 - (b) Prompt application permits the buyer time to evaluate various coverage levels and prices.
 - (c) Delaying the application for insurance may limit opportunities to obtain the most suitable coverage and may limit opportunities to address any unforeseen problems or delays in obtaining coverage.
 - (d) In recent years, many transactions have been delayed or terminated because of problems associated with obtaining insurance.
- (3) Ask for written confirmation from the insurance agent that the insurance company:
 - (a) has received the application;
 - (b) has reviewed the applicant's CLUE report; and
 - (c) has conducted all necessary reviews to issue a policy at the particular price quoted (some insurance companies may ask for specific information or may wish to inspect the property).
- (4) Verify that the insurance coverage the buyer chooses is acceptable to the buyer's lender.

E. If one is not able to obtain insurance at a reasonable price or more information is needed, contact the Texas Department of Insurance (www.helpinsure.com or www.tdi.state.tx.us).

Receipt acknowledged by:


Signature
6/2/2021 10:45:51 PM GMT
Robert W. Randle


Signature
6/2/2021 10:50:35 PM GMT
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INFORMATION ABOUT SPECIAL FLOOD HAZARD AREAS

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CONCERNING THE PROPERTY AT

A. FLOOD AREAS:

- (1) The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) designates areas that have a high risk of flooding as special flood hazard areas.
- (2) A property that is in a special flood hazard area lies in a "V-Zone" or "A-Zone" as noted on flood insurance rate maps. Both V-Zone and A-Zone areas are areas with high risk of flooding.
- (3) Some properties may also lie in the "floodway" which is the channel of a river or other watercourse and the adjacent land areas that must be reserved in order to discharge a flood under FEMA rules. Communities must regulate development in these floodways.

B. AVAILABILITY OF FLOOD INSURANCE:

- (1) Generally, flood insurance is available regardless of whether the property is located in or out of a special flood hazard area. Contact your insurance agent to determine if any limitations or restrictions apply to the property in which you are interested.
- (2) FEMA encourages every property owner to purchase flood insurance regardless of whether the property is in a high, moderate, or low risk flood area.
- (3) A homeowner may obtain flood insurance coverage (up to certain limits) through the National Flood Insurance Program. Supplemental coverage is available through private insurance carriers.
- (4) A mortgage lender making a federally related mortgage will require the borrower to maintain flood insurance if the property is in a special flood hazard area.

C. GROUND FLOOR REQUIREMENTS:

- (1) Many homes in special flood hazard areas are built-up or are elevated. In elevated homes the ground floor typically lies below the base flood elevation and the first floor is elevated on piers, columns, posts, or piles. The base flood elevation is the highest level at which a flood is likely to occur as shown on flood insurance rate maps.
- (2) Federal, state, county, and city regulations:
 - (a) restrict the use and construction of any ground floor enclosures in elevated homes that are in special flood hazard areas.
 - (b) may prohibit or restrict the remodeling, rebuilding, and redevelopment of property and improvements in the floodway.
- (3) The first floor of all homes must now be built above the base flood elevation.
 - (a) Older homes may have been built in compliance with applicable regulations at the time of construction and may have first floors that lie below the base flood elevation, but flood insurance rates for such homes may be significant.

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- (b) It is possible that modifications were made to a ground floor enclosure after a home was first built. The modifications may or may not comply with applicable regulations and may or may not affect flood insurance rates.
 - (c) It is important for a buyer to determine if the first floor of a home is elevated at or above the base flood elevation. It is also important for a buyer to determine if the property lies in a floodway.
- (4) Ground floor enclosures that lie below the base flood elevation may be used only for: (i) parking; (ii) storage; and (iii) building access. Plumbing, mechanical, or electrical items in ground floor enclosures that lie below the base flood elevation may be prohibited or restricted and may not be eligible for flood insurance coverage. Additionally:
- (a) in A-Zones, the ground floor enclosures below the base flood elevation must have flow-through vents or openings that permit the automatic entry and exit of floodwaters;
 - (b) in V-Zones, the ground floor enclosures must have break-away walls, screening, or lattice walls; and
 - (c) in floodways, the remodeling or reconstruction of any improvements may be prohibited or otherwise restricted.

D. COMPLIANCE:

- (1) The above-referenced property may or may not comply with regulations affecting ground floor enclosures below the base flood elevation.
- (2) A property owner's eligibility to purchase or maintain flood insurance, as well as the cost of the flood insurance, is dependent on whether the property complies with the regulations affecting ground floor enclosures.
- (3) A purchaser or property owner may be required to remove or modify a ground floor enclosure that is not in compliance with city or county building requirements or is not entitled to an exemption from such requirements.
- (4) A flood insurance policy maintained by the current property owner does not mean that the property is in compliance with the regulations affecting ground floor enclosures or that the buyer will be able to continue to maintain flood insurance at the same rate.
- (5) Insurance carriers calculate the cost of flood insurance using a rate that is based on the elevation of the lowest floor.
 - (a) If the ground floor lies below the base flood elevation and does not meet federal, state, county, and city requirements, the ground floor will be the lowest floor for the purpose of computing the rate.
 - (b) If the property is in compliance, the first elevated floor will be the lowest floor and the insurance rate will be significantly less than the rate for a property that is not in compliance.
 - (c) If the property lies in a V-Zone the flood insurance rate will be impacted if a ground floor enclosure below the base flood elevation exceeds 299 square feet (even if constructed with break-away walls).

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E. ELEVATION CERTIFICATE:

The elevation certificate is an important tool in determining flood insurance rates. It is used to provide elevation information that is necessary to ensure compliance with floodplain management laws. To determine the proper insurance premium rate, insurers rely on an elevation certificate to certify building elevations at an acceptable level above flood map levels. If available in your area, it is recommended that you obtain an elevation certificate for the property as soon as possible to accurately determine future flood insurance rates.

You are encouraged to: (1) inspect the property for all purposes, including compliance with any ground floor enclosure requirement; (2) review the flood insurance policy (costs and coverage) with your insurance agent; and (3) contact the building permitting authority if you have any questions about building requirements or compliance issues.

Receipt acknowledged by:


6/2/2021 10:46:00 PM GMT
Signature _____ Date
Robert W. Randle


6/2/2021 10:51:03 PM GMT
Signature _____ Date
Cindy F. Randle