River Corridor & Floodplain Protection Program
Watershed Management Division
Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation

VERMONT
Agency of Natural Resources

Vermont Model Flood Hazard Bylaws

The River Corridor and Floodplain Protection Program is pleased to provide model flood hazard bylaws to assist municipalities in the development of their flood hazard regulations. The model text is presented in a modular format to provide flexibility in meeting individual community needs.

Flooding is Vermont's most common natural disaster. Communities regulating flood hazards to at least the minimum standards of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) enables residents to secure flood insurance and makes the community eligible for federal hazard mitigation grant funding to prepare for the next flood event.

The federal minimum requirements are insufficient to ensure community resilience against flooding. In particular, they allow for continued filling and encroachment in floodplains, resulting in increased flood heights and velocities over time, putting new and existing investments at increased risk. In addition, federal minimum standards are focused on reducing risk to insurable buildings from flood inundation. Flood-related erosion is Vermont's primary mode of damage. The model bylaws serve as a starting point for consideration, and the text may be tailored to meet community needs. These models contain standards that exceed NFIP minimum requirements and approximate the standards adopted by the State in its regulation of floodplains and river corridors.

The State of Vermont highly recommends adoption and enforcement of the standards in these model bylaws to reduce community flood risk and protect remaining floodplain assets up and downstream of our built environment.

Questions about the models and community options should be directed to your Regional Floodplain Manager or your Regional Planning Commission.

Frequently Asked Questions and a comparison of the higher standards in these models against the NFIP minimum requirements are available here: http://dec.vermont.gov/watershed/rivers/river-corridor-and-floodplain-protection/municipal-assistance

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To preserve, enhance, restore, and conserve Vermont's natural resources, and protect human health, for the benefit of this and future generations.