



## Is Your Sign in a Regulated Floodplain?

970-416-2632 | [FloodplainAdministration@fcgov.com](mailto:FloodplainAdministration@fcgov.com)

The City of Fort Collins requires all development in the floodplain, including sign installation, to meet the flood protection standards in Chapter 10 of City Code. An approved Floodplain Use Permit is required. Depending on the location and type of sign, additional requirements may also apply. Here are some considerations:

### Signs on a Building



*Lucky's Market is an example of a building where the value of the improvements met the Substantial Improvement Requirement, and the entire building had to be brought up to code.*

**Older Buildings:** If the building was not built to flood protection standards, it is subject to the Substantial Improvement Requirement, and all improvements to the building need to be documented. The cost of the improvement (sign, electrical, labor cost, etc.) will need to be documented as part of the Floodplain Use Permit.

- If the sign is being done as part of a remodel project, the sign cost can be included in the cost list provided by the contractor doing the remodel, and a separate floodplain permit will not be required.
- The Floodplain Use Permit cost is \$200.
- This is done to bring structures into compliance over time and is based on the value of improvement. If there is 50% improvement to the building, then the building must be brought up to code.

**Newer Buildings:** If the building was built to flood protection standards, then no additional requirements apply. A Floodplain Use Permit is not required.



## Freestanding Permanent Signs



These types of signs require **additional documentation**.

- Location is important. Is it in the floodway (the most restrictive section of the floodplain) or in the flood fringe? What is the flood depth?
- Parts of the sign that could be damaged by a flood are required to be elevated or floodproofed 18-24" above the 100-year flood level.
- Plans are required, including the floodplain information (such as elevations and floodproofing method(s) if applicable).
- If the sign is in the floodway, a no-rise certification by a Colorado-registered professional engineer is required to document no-rise in flood elevation.
- Surveying may be required.
- The Floodplain Use Permit cost is \$200, or if it is in the floodway, \$300-\$500, depending on the analysis needed.
- Please consult with Floodplain Staff early in the process to discuss design considerations. 970-416-2632

**Electrical Requirements:** Please refer to NEC 682.3, which requires the electrical datum to be 2 ft. above the 100-year flood level. All electrical below that elevation must be rated as submersible. Please provide details and notes on the plans regarding conformance with NEC 682.3.

## Signs that DO NOT need a Floodplain Use Permit:

- Refaced Signs (wall signs, projecting signs, freestanding, etc.)
- Window Signs either lighted or non-lighted
- Painted/applied signs




## How can I find out if my site is in the floodplain?

Check the online map at: [fcgov.com/floodplain-maps](https://fcgov.com/floodplain-maps)


- Click on the dark blue **“View Map”** button



City Floodplain Maps

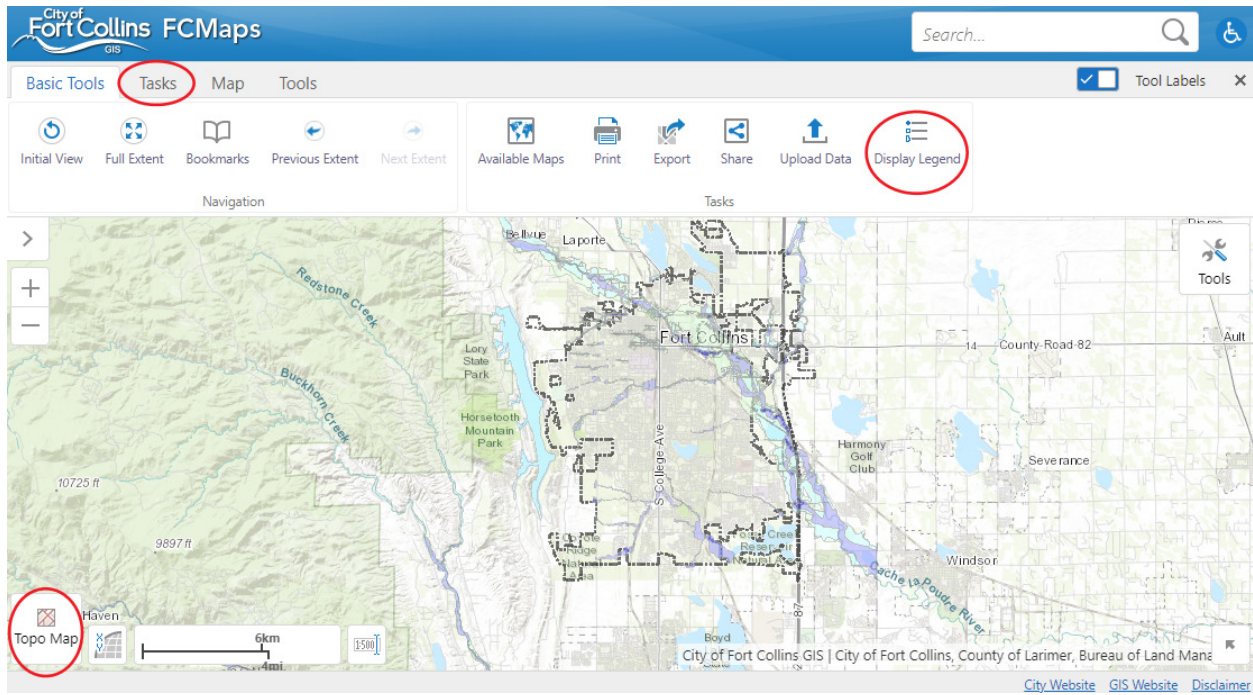
View Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and City  floodplain maps to determine if your property is in a floodplain.

 Elevation certificates are available online.

 View Map

### Using the Map

1. To find a location, you can simply zoom in or search by address:
  - a. Click the **“Tasks”** tab at the top
  - b. Click **“Search by Address”**
2. If you want to see the aerial photo, click on the **“Topo Map”** button in the bottom left, then choose **“Near Map”**.
3. To see the legend, click **“Display Legend”** in the upper right. The **light blue** and **dark blue** areas require a Floodplain Use Permit for signs.



You can always call us at 970-416-2632, and we will be happy to look up an address and discuss the project with you.

## Sign Permit and Floodplain Permit Process

**Faster Process** – applicant knows the site is in the floodplain:

- Contact Floodplain Staff to discuss the project.
- Complete the required paperwork (floodplain permit, cost list, plans, etc.), and pay the Floodplain Use Permit Fee.
- Apply for the Sign Permit.
- The Permit System will automatically place a floodplain hold on the permit. Floodplain Staff will release the hold.
- Zoning Staff will work with you to complete the Sign Permit process.

**Slower Process** – applicant does not know if the site is in the floodplain:

- Apply for the Sign Permit.
- The Permit System will automatically place a floodplain hold on the permit.
- Floodplain Staff will contact the applicant to discuss the floodplain requirements.
- Complete the required paperwork (floodplain permit, cost list, plans, etc.), and pay the Floodplain Use Permit Fee.
- Floodplain Staff will release the hold.
- Zoning Staff will work with you on any final issues to complete the Sign Permit process.



## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Was there a Code change that required Floodplain Permits?**

- No, this was already in the City Code but was not being enforced as it should.

### **When will this start?**

- The permitting process will begin on January 1. This will allow time for sign contractors to incorporate the permit costs into project bids.

### **Why does the City care about the cost of the sign when it is in the floodplain?**

- A sign is considered an improvement to the building. As a way to bring older structures into compliance over time, the City requires documentation of the improvements being made to structures. If the improvements reach 50% of the value of a structure, it is considered substantially improved and must be brought up to code. This is a minimum State and FEMA regulation.

### **If a building is undergoing a remodel, can the sign cost be incorporated into the remodel permit?**

- Yes, the sign cost can be incorporated into the remodel cost and you will not be required to submit a second Floodplain Use Permit.

### **Can someone help me fill out the Floodplain Use Permit?**

- Yes, Floodplain Staff will complete most of the Floodplain Use Permit and will highlight the fields you will need to complete. A cost list of the improvements will be required. (Include materials and labor for the sign and any electrical work.)

## **Floodplain Staff Contact Information:**

Contact us at 970-416-2632 or [FloodplainAdministration@fcgov.com](mailto:FloodplainAdministration@fcgov.com).

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