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Contact: Betsy Clayton, APR/CPRC  
Communications Director  
Lee County Government  
239-533-2221  
[LeeCountyPIO@leegov.com](mailto:LeeCountyPIO@leegov.com)

**Lee County to send letter to National Flood Insurance Program policyholders in advance of FEMA mailing**

Fort Myers, FL, Aug. 5, 2024 – County Manager Dave Harner will mail a letter this week to more than 67,000 households in Unincorporated Lee County with policies from the National Flood Insurance Program to offer an update and reassurance about efforts to work with the Federal Emergency Management Agency to retain policy discounts.

FEMA is mandated to mail a letter to residents later this month about the status of the program, and the county believes some of the language may understandably cause residents concern.

Specifically, the FEMA letter may speak to removing Unincorporated Lee County from the Community Rating System, which is what is now giving Unincorporated Lee County residents up to a 25% discount on their flood insurance. The letter also may say that all policyholders would receive a \$50 surcharge on their policies if the county were placed on probation. The letter may also state that if the community is suspended, then no one in the affected area will be eligible for federal flood insurance.

The county's letter, which can be viewed at [www.leegov.com/femacr](http://www.leegov.com/femacr)s, tells residents that none of this is slated to happen during the 2024 hurricane season. The county has many months to coordinate with FEMA to create a collaborative plan and to avoid being placed on probation from the NFIP.

Harner said Lee County remains dedicated to providing transparency and context every step of the process.

"We are actively working with FEMA on a plan that negates the need for much of what will be mentioned in their letter," Harner said. "NFIP policyholders in Unincorporated Lee County are at the forefront of our priorities, and our Lee Board of County Commissioners is committed to retaining residents' discounts and continuing participation in this important flood insurance program."

Residents who have questions after receiving the FEMA letter can email [LeeCountyFEMA@leegov.com](mailto:LeeCountyFEMA@leegov.com); more information is available at [www.leegov.com/femacr](http://www.leegov.com/femacr)s.

Lee County has been working with FEMA since Hurricane Ian made landfall in 2022 and has had weekly meetings with FEMA since Spring 2024. The county was notified July 19 that FEMA will maintain Unincorporated Lee County's CRS rating of 5 and NFIP policyholder discounts while the county and FEMA continue to work on a plan to address identified continuing issues. That plan is due this fall.

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