

# TOWN OF OCEAN RIDGE

6450 NORTH OCEAN BOULEVARD  
OCEAN RIDGE, FLORIDA 33435

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July 2020

Re: Installation of Mechanical and Electrical Systems in the Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHA)

Attention: Please read this notice carefully, your cooperation and response is requested.

Our community participates in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and enforces a local floodplain management ordinance. The ordinance is intended to require construction practices to minimize flood damage, minimize damage to utilities, and minimize public funds for response to and recovery from flood events. In addition to the ordinance, we enforce the Florida Building Code, which governs the construction of flood-prone structures and buildings, as well as associated mechanical, electrical, and plumbing components.

The Town of Ocean Ridge is providing this notice as a reminder that new and replacement air conditioning compressors, ductwork, and air handler units installed in SFHAs must be properly elevated to or above the design flood elevation. This notice advises your company that the Town of Ocean Ridge must issue permits for installation of all new air conditioning systems in special flood hazard areas and may be required to obtain a permit for replacement in accordance with the Town of Ocean Ridge's floodplain management ordinance. This reminder is intended to provide you with basic information and resources and should not be considered a substitute for complying with the local ordinance or the *Florida Building Code*. Should you have questions, desire additional guidance, or obtain a permit application form, please see our website [www.oceanridgeflorida.com](http://www.oceanridgeflorida.com) or you may contact the Building Department at 561-732-2635.

**Permits Required:** If a structure is located in a SFHA, the contractor or property owner must apply and receive a permit prior to installation of a new mechanical, electrical, and/or duct system and may be required for replacement systems. Applications for a permit can be obtained and submitted at the Town of Ocean Ridge Building Department or online at [www.oceanridgeflorida.com](http://www.oceanridgeflorida.com).

**Receiving a Flood Zone Determination:** Contractors or property owners can obtain a flood zone determination and base flood elevations for a property by visiting the town's website at [www.oceanridgeflorida.com](http://www.oceanridgeflorida.com), click on Building & Zoning, then click on Maps and, finally, click on FIRM maps (effective October 2017). Alternatively, contractors or property owners may determine required elevations must be used for installation of mechanical and electrical systems as described below.

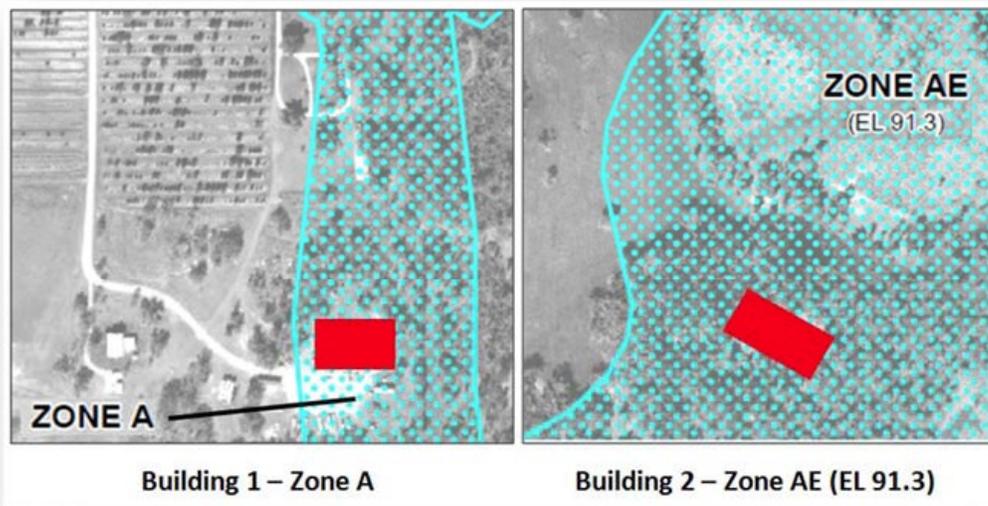
### Local, State and Federal Installation Requirements:

The Town of Ocean Ridge Code of Ordinance Article II Flood Damage Prevention, the 2017 Florida Building Code (FBC, R322.1.6) and the National Flood Insurance Program (44 CFR 60.3) requires that mechanical, electrical, and duct systems shall be located at or above the design flood elevation in Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHAs) where a base flood elevation number is provided (Zones V,

VE, or AE), or at least 2 feet above the highest adjacent grade if a base flood elevation number is not specified on the community's Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) plus 1 foot for freeboard (BFE + 1 foot).

**Identifying Required Elevations:** FIRMs for the Town of Ocean Ridge can be accessed at FEMA's Mapping Service Center Website: <https://msc.fema.gov/> or [www.oceanridgeflorida.com](http://www.oceanridgeflorida.com). Once your company or the contractor has located a specific property on the community's respective FIRM panel, your company or the contractor should determine whether the structure is in a flood zone, and whether a design flood elevation has been provided (freeboard).

In the example below, Building 1 (outlined in red) is located in a Zone A and Building 2 is located in a Zone AE. Building 1 does not have a specified flood depth number, and Building 2 has an elevation requirement of 91.3 feet above sea level. Since Building 1 does not have a specified elevation number provided on the FIRM, all mechanical, electrical, and duct systems should be installed at least 2 feet above the highest adjacent grade at this building. Since Building 2 does have a specified base flood elevation number, in this case 91.3 feet, all systems should be installed at or above an elevation of 91.3 feet above sea level.



As a general rule, replacement compressors must be no lower than the Finished Floor Elevation (FFE) of the structure. If your company or the contractor is unsure about elevation requirements pertaining to a structure, your company or the contractor should contact the Building Department at 561-732-2635 or by email at [LBurns@oceanridgeflorida.com](mailto:LBurns@oceanridgeflorida.com).

**Request Follow-Up Action:** The Town of Ocean Ridge requests that your company provide a brief response to this notice, acknowledging that you have received, reviewed and intend to comply with this guidance to ensure compliance with the town's floodplain ordinance. You may email me at [LBurns@oceanridgeflorida.com](mailto:LBurns@oceanridgeflorida.com).

Please keep a copy of this notice and your company's response for your records. We thank you in advance for your cooperation and assistance in ensuring that our community is diligent in preventing loss of building equipment due to flood hazards.

Sincerely,  
Lisa A. Burns  
Building Clerk