

Flood Insurance Information Sheet for California

The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) is essential to completing half a million property sales each year¹, but it must be reauthorized by September 30, 2019 to continue providing flood insurance. REALTORS[®] support H.R. 3167 and urge Congress to find a way forward on a long-term NFIP reauthorization.

Properties at Risk

Every property in the state has some flood risk; wherever it rains, it can flood, yet not all at-risk are insured.

14,177,270	Total housing units, 2017
1,964,142	Housing units in the state within a 500-year floodplain, 2015 ²
226,337	Number of NFIP policies in force as of April 30, 2019 ³
2%	Percent of housing units with an NFIP policy

Flood Insurance Benefits to Policyholders

For many, owning a property is the biggest source of wealth. The NFIP offers substantially more rebuilding assistance than FEMA's Individuals and Households Program (IHP) for uninsured properties.

\$548,304	Median home value, 2019 Q1 ⁴
\$19,079	Average NFIP dollar amount paid on residential claims for properties in the state, 1996–2016 ⁵
11,483	Number of NFIP paid claims ⁵
\$11,056	Average IHP disaster payment to those without flood insurance in the state, 2006–2016 ⁶
5	Number of IHP disaster payments ⁶

98% of U.S. counties have experienced at least one major flood disaster declaration.⁷ Without flood insurance, property owners must turn to the federal government for rebuilding assistance. The total cost to taxpayers of uninsured property damage is \$3.4 billion each year.⁸

^[1] Source: NAR estimate

^[2] Source: NYU Furman Center FloodzoneData.us based on FEMA National Flood Hazard Layer as of May 2016

^[3] Source: NAR tabulation of FEMA Policies Redacted Data Set released July 16, 2019 (data through as of April 30, 2019).

^[4] Source: NAR estimate using data from U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey and Federal Housing Finance Agency Home Price Index

^[5] Source: FEMA NFIP Historical Residential Claims released March 8, 2017, <https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/130222>

^[6] Source: FEMA IHP Flood Damage released March 13, 2017, <https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/130225>

^[7] Source: FEMA

^[8] Source: Congressional Budget Office' Expected Costs of Damage from Hurricane Winds and Storm Related Flooding, p.3., April 2019

The one-year cost of flood damage to the residential sector is \$20 billion, of which 17% is for federal disaster assistance (\$3.4 B).

<https://www.cbo.gov/system/files/2019-04/55019-ExpectedCostsFromWindStorm.pdf>