

July 30, 2012

***ON JULY 30, MAYOR LEONARD DESIDERIO ANNOUNCED SEA ISLE CITY'S NEW FEMA RATING, WHICH WILL RESULT IN A 20% DISCOUNT ON FLOOD INSURANCE PREMIUMS FOR ALL FEMA-COMPLIANT STRUCTURES***

**SEA ISLE CITY, NJ** – On July 30, Mayor Leonard Desiderio held a press conference on the steps of city hall to announce that Sea Isle City has just achieved “Class 6 Community” status by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), which will result in a 20% discount on flood insurance premiums for local property owners.

The process of lowering Sea Isle City’s flood insurance rates began in 1993, when Mayor Desiderio was first elected into office. At that time, Sea Isle City was on the verge of being placed on probation with FEMA, after having lost eligibility to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program’s Community Rating System (CRS) program – a problem that the City corrected by working with FEMA officials, local contractors and homeowners. FEMA’s CRS program gives discounts on flood insurance policies to towns meeting their minimum standards of flood protection. Greater discounts are offered to communities that go above FEMA’s minimum standards.

“This project was nearly twenty years in the making,” said Mayor Desiderio during the press conference. “We simply kept moving forward toward the goal of receiving a discounted rate. To achieve that goal, we worked together as a community, we took numerous trips to FEMA headquarters in New York City, we involved Congressman Frank LoBiondo’s office, and we wrote new ordinances that have taken us from being last in the state to one of only seven Class 6 Communities in New Jersey.”

According to Sea Isle City Solicitor Paul Baldini, one of the several ordinances written eliminated so-called “bonus rooms” on the ground level of homes, which are not permitted to be habitable areas yet have occasionally been converted into family rooms or spare bedrooms. Another ordinance called for a non-conversion agreement between the City and all property owners prior to the sale of a home or approval of construction, which insures full compliance with current floodplain regulations. Baldini added that Sea Isle City also benefitted from improved building standards, one of which has required all new homes built in the resort since 1993 to be constructed at least one-foot higher than FEMA’s Base Flood Elevation.

Additionally, two years ago Sea Isle City hired Avalon's Floodplain Manager Sal DeSimone, who now serves the City as a consultant, working closely with Sea Isle City Construction Official Neil Byrne, the City's current Floodplain Manager.

The FEMA discounts will take effect on flood policies that renew after October 1, 2012. By Sea Isle City qualifying for this program, the taxpayers of Sea Isle City will save over \$800,000 in insurance premiums each year.

"This is very important news for every flood policy holder in Sea Isle City," said the mayor. "Our homeowners have played a huge role in getting us here – and we are very grateful for that. Our ultimate goal was to be accepted in FEMA's CRS program, and we did it!"

For additional information about Sea Isle City's floodplain management, visit [www.seaislecitynj.us](http://www.seaislecitynj.us) or phone Sea Isle's Construction Office, (609) 263-1166. For information regarding individual flood insurance policies please consult with your insurance agent.