

HINTS FOR HOMEOWNERS

Rebuilding And Saving Energy In A Flood's Aftermath

(NAPSA)—Every year, flooding causes more than \$2 billion of property damage in the United States. In a high-risk area, a home has a 26 percent chance of being damaged by a flood during the course of a 30-year mortgage, compared to a 9 percent chance of damage from a fire.

Flooding occurs from a range of causes and conditions, and not just in high-risk areas. Inland flooding can occur when a storm stalls in a single location—potentially hundreds of miles from a coastline. Plus, the failure of dams, impoundments or other water regulatory systems can result in flooding. Flash flooding may even occur in arid parts of the country.

In the aftermath of a devastating flood, energy efficiency may not seem like a high priority during rebuilding. But after the walls dry out, homeowners can realize savings by rebuilding to reduce future damage. When homeowners and builders take advantage of energy efficient materials, equipment and rebuilding methods, it becomes possible to:

- Reduce vulnerability to future flood damage and disruption;
- Potentially lower home flood insurance rates; and
- Reduce monthly energy bills and increase home comfort.

Reconstruction Techniques

In the interest of increasing energy efficiency, the U.S. Department of Energy recommends looking at the following areas when rebuilding a flood-damaged home:

- **Furnace/Air Conditioner**—If these units are damaged or are near the end of their service life, replace them with ENERGY STAR® units and put them on a raised platform, or on the second floor, or in the attic to keep them



After a flood, rebuilding a home in a more energy-efficient fashion will save money and help prevent future damage.

above potential flood levels. Since it is likely your home will be more energy efficient after reconstruction, it may be possible to downsize the system.

- **Ductwork**—Replacement ducts should be relocated to the attic, or above a dropped ceiling or in the space between the floors of two-story houses. After it has been repaired, cleaned, and sanitized, ductwork should be sealed with mastic and insulated to R-8 if it is in the attic.

- **Water heater**—Instantaneous (tankless) gas water heaters may be a desirable option versus relocating a tank type gas water heater to the attic. A tankless water heater occupies less space and it is much more efficient than a tank type gas water heater.

- **Wall Insulation**—Walls subject to flooding should be insulated with a closed cell foam insulation material. This material doesn't soak up water so it doesn't have to dry out after being flooded.

For more information about energy efficient building reconstruction techniques and practices, visit www.energysavers.gov.