



**MEMPHIS AND  
SHELBY COUNTY** **DIVISION OF PLANNING  
AND DEVELOPMENT**

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**MEMORANDUM (Updated 5/28/21)**

To: All Building Inspectors, Plans Examiners and Managers

From: Bobby Decker

Date: May 28, 2021

Subject: Lowest floor level elevation certificate

All,

Section 110.3.3 (amendment section 109.3.3) for commercial and section R109.1.3 for residential requires a lowest floor elevation certificate for all building (residential and commercial - even accessory buildings with permanent foundations) when they are located in a flood hazard zone. The certificate must comply with section 1612.5 of the IBC for commercial and section R322 for residential buildings.

**Procedures: Plan Review**

1. Accela automatically displays a **condition (notice)** on the permit when a building is in a flood hazard area. When this notice is there, plan review will check the plat to see if the lot(s) in question are indeed still in the flood hazard area. Most of the time in new subdivisions, the lots will have been taken out of the flood hazard area.
2. If the lot is no longer in the flood hazard area, the plans examiner will put a comment on Accela stating the lot is no longer in the flood hazard area per recorded plat and a lowest level certificate is not required.
3. If the lot is in a flood hazard area, the plans examiner will put the owner/contractor on notice that a certificate will be required after the foundation but prior to vertical construction.
4. The plans examiner will mark "Engineering (city or county) in the Accela workflow as a reviewer for notification purposes.

**Inspections:**

1. When the notice appears that a building is in the flood hazard area, building inspectors will verify whether plans examiners have made the comment that the lot is no longer in the flood hazard area.
2. If they have made the comment, building inspectors will not require the lowest level certificate.
3. If they have not made the comment, inspectors will need to require a lowest floor level certificate signed by a licensed surveyor at the time of approving the foundation. Per code, the certificate is due before they begin vertical construction. However, if, because of time

constraints, the contractor wishes to continue with construction before the certificate is approved, it will be at his/her own risk.

4. The certificate will be brought back to the office and given to the senior inspectors to be forward by email to city/county engineering for approval.
5. We must have an approved certificate before we issue the final and/or the certificate of occupancy.
6. Portable Residential storage buildings (no permanent foundation) will be exempted.

Thank you for your help.