

Panhandle Regional Residential Safe Room/Storm Shelter Rebate Program



GUIDELINES AND APPLICATION



*Funding for this program made possible by the Texas Division of Emergency Management and
the Federal Emergency Management Agency*

Panhandle Regional Residential Safe Room Rebate Program Guidelines

The Panhandle Regional Planning Commission (PRPC) is implementing Phase V of the Panhandle Regional Residential Safe Room/Storm Shelter Rebate Program. As with the previous phases of the program, the fifth phase of the Panhandle Residential Safe Room Rebate Program is being funded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) through the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM).

- This program is **only** intended to serve the 26-county area of the Texas Panhandle.
- The FEMA/TDEM program rules state the applicants must be the owner of the home, at the time of rebate award, or a builder or developer, in which the safe room is to be built. The rules also require the home be a single family dwelling or duplex that lies outside a FEMA or locally mapped 100- year floodplain.
- For the purpose of this program, a safe room/storm shelter is an above or below ground unit built to the FEMA P-320, Fourth Edition (Taking Shelter from the Storm), FEMA P-361, Third Edition (Safe Rooms for Tornadoes and Hurricanes), and ICC 500-2014 design standards. A safe room built according to these standards is expected to withstand the forces imposed on it by extreme winds without failing. **The only units authorized for rebate support under this program will be units certified as meeting the FEMA P-320, FEMA P-361 and ICC 500-2014 standards.**
- This is a 50:50 matching program that will provide homeowners a rebate of up to \$3,000 to offset the cost of installing a safe room/storm shelter, built to current FEMA design standard requirements, in a residence. **Homeowners must first apply for a rebate and receive a written confirmation of rebate award from the PRPC before being assured of receiving this assistance.** The application will be used to determine eligibility.
- Citizen participation is voluntary. Your signature on the Signed Statement of Voluntary Participation designates that an applicant is choosing to participate in the rebate program of their own volition.
- Rebates are not transferrable. Rebate awards are only applicable to the recipient(s) named in the original application received by PRPC and cannot be transferred to another person.
- Applicant must agree to have the shelter's Lat/Long (GPS) information be submitted to their local emergency management coordinator for inclusion in any emergency 911 databases accessible by fire and police. This release allows first responders to more quickly locate persons following an event, that the shelter would become necessary to utilize. Your signature on the Signed Statement of Voluntary Participation designates that you agree to have the shelter's Lat/Long information submitted to these databases.

- The rebate program is **not** retroactive. Any safe rooms/storm shelters installed prior to an applicant receiving a rebate award from PRPC is not eligible for rebate.
- Applicant must agree to have PRPC representative to conduct a site visit and take pictures of shelter (PRPC must photo-document the shelter for FEMA reimbursement purposes).
- Applicant must submit all necessary paperwork to PRPC as required by the program to be eligible for a rebate. Which includes, but is not limited to:
 - Completed, signed application; and
 - Provide proof of ownership of the property, such as current appraisal statement; and
 - Copy of Flood Insurance Rate Map or statement from the local floodplain administrator assuring the property is not located in the floodplain; and
 - Copies of contractor invoices, building permits, inspections or certificates of occupancy; and
 - Copies of proof of payment for all costs claimed, such as copy of front and back of cancelled check or copy of bankcard statement showing debit/credit payment; and
 - Required latitude/longitude information for storm shelter in decimal degrees with five (5) decimal places; and
 - Copies of the signed and notarized Texas Division of Emergency Management Certificate of Installation and Inspection; and
 - Copies of paperwork (to FEMA's requirements) that shelter was designed and installed according to current FEMA design standards; and
 - Other paperwork as deemed necessary.
- Applicant must verify that all responses and documentation are true and valid by signing and dating application and signed statement of voluntary participation.
- PRPC's process for awarding participation in the rebate program and managing the queue of applications is dependent upon receipt of funding. Upon PRPC receiving an award from Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM), PRPC will use a first come, first serve basis to award rebates. Please note there is a high probability that PRPC will receive more applications than can be funded. **Rebates are not guaranteed.** Rebates will only be awarded as funding is received. Applicants must meet all of the eligibility and installation requirements to receive a rebate.

The steps for requesting and potentially receiving a rebate are described below.

Step 1: *You should determine if the residence in which the safe room/storm shelter would be installed lies within a FEMA or locally-mapped floodplain.*

FEMA prohibits the use of these rebate dollars to support the cost of installing safe rooms or storm shelters in residences that lie inside a “floodplain”. For the purpose of this requirement, homes built within a FEMA designated Special Flood Hazard Area (or Zone) are considered to be in the “floodplain” and ineligible for rebate. The local flood plain manager will verify whether or not a property is in a floodplain.

There are a several ways this determination can be made. Rebate applicants can:

- Contact their local city code enforcement officer or county floodplain administrator to determine if their property is in a Special Flood Hazard Area; or
- Go to FEMA’s website at: <https://msc.fema.gov/portal/search>, and enter your address in the search box. Click on the “View Map” option to view your FIRM. Then click on “Make a FIRMette” on the left; or
- Contact PRPC program staff for assistance in making that determination.

Step 2: *On the Rebate Application form, you’ll certify, by signature, that you are the owner occupant, builder, or developer of the residence in which the unit is to be installed. Please note this information will be confirmed. These terms are defined below.*

- *Owner* – legally own the home. Fixed Property, owner of both land and buildings.
- *Builder* – You’re building the home in which the unit will be installed either for your own occupancy or as a contractor for another owner occupant/developer.
- *Developer* – You’re developing a property or properties, contracting with a builder to install a unit in a residence for sale to another owner occupant.

Step 3: On the Rebate Application form, you will indicate the year that your home was originally built. Any home that is more than 45 years old will need to be evaluated by Texas Historical Commission (THC) prior to installation of a storm shelter. Storm shelters installed prior to THC approval are not eligible for rebate. Additional information will be requested should your home need to be evaluated by THC.

Step 4: *Complete and submit your rebate application.*

The original signed or electronically signed application must be submitted; this will serve as your certification that the information contained in the application is true.

Step 5: *Wait for Rebate Award Letter from PRPC.*

If your application is selected for rebate, you will receive a letter of notification from the PRPC authorizing you to proceed with the unit installation. This program is not retroactive. Shelters installed prior to notification of rebate award by PRPC are not eligible for rebate.

Step 6: *Identify the contractor who will provide and install the unit in your home.*

Safe rooms/storm shelters come in a variety of shapes and sizes, above ground, others lie below ground. However, for the purpose of this program and because it is a requirement of the TDEM, any unit on which a rebate is paid under this program must be built to FEMA design standards. Current FEMA guidance requires installers comply with the below publications:

- FEMA P-320, Fourth Edition (Taking Shelter from the Storm)
- FEMA P-361, Third Edition (Safe Rooms for Tornadoes and Hurricanes)
- ICC 500-2014

Residents are encouraged to contact several different contractors to determine which unit will best suit their needs. Paperwork providing proof of compliance with FEMA design standards will be required.

Step 7: *Complete the installation of the unit and submit your documentation per the instructions provided in the PRPC letter of notification you will receive (if awarded) authorizing you to proceed with the unit installation.*

To enable the PRPC to process the rebate, you will need to submit the following record documents once the unit has been installed:

- A signed statement from you that your participation in this program has been strictly voluntary (a copy is shown in the guideline attachments); and
- the notarized Certificate of Installation; and
- copies of all invoices received showing payments made by the applicant; and
- other paperwork as necessary.

Step 8: FEMA/TDEM requires the GPS coordinate positioning of each home receiving a unit under this program be recorded. Therefore, as a step in the rebate payment process, PRPC staff will make a visit to each unit site, verify the existence of the unit and record the longitude/latitude coordinates of the residence in which the unit has been installed. The street address of the residence will be provided to the local 9-1-1 dispatch to speed potential search and rescue operations following a storm(s). As a provision of rebate payment, the owner occupant, builder or developer will have to agree to this data gathering step by the PRPC. This is done on the Statement of Voluntary Participation form you will receive with your approval papers.

Attachments:

- Attachment 1 – Rebate Application Form

PRPC is currently accepting applications for rebates on safe room/storm shelters to be installed. Rebates are not guaranteed. Rebates are contingent upon receipt of funding. This application form will enable PRPC staff to determine eligibility.

- Attachment 2 – Signed Statement of Voluntary Participation

This form is to be completed after the installation of the safe room/storm shelter. This form will then be submitted along with a copy of the invoice from the shelter installer.

Panhandle Regional Residential Safe Room/Storm Shelter Program Rebate Application

The Panhandle Regional Residential Safe Room/Storm Shelter Program is being funded under a grant provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) through the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM). This is a rebate program designed to help homeowners offset the cost of installing above or below ground shelters, meeting FEMA P-320 standards, in homes throughout the 26 counties of the Texas Panhandle. Application completion instructions are on the back of this form. Completion of this application form serves as your notice of interest to participate in this program. For questions please email shelterrebates@theprpc.org.

Applicant Information:

☐ Homeowner ☐ Builder ☐ Developer

Mr. or Ms.: ☐ Mr. ☐ Ms.

First Name: _____

Last Name: _____

Suffix: _____

Applicant Information (Property Address):

911 Address: _____

City: _____

Zip Code: _____

County: _____

Property GPS Coordinates (five decimal places):

Latitude: _____

Longitude: _____

Applicant Information (Contact Information):

Day Phone: _____

Email: _____

Cell Phone: _____

Home Phone: _____

What type of Dwelling will this unit be installed in?

- ☐ Mobile Home
☐ Existing Single Family
☐ Existing Multi-Family *

★ If Existing, what year was the home built? _____

☐ Planned New Construction

★ If New Construction, what type is planned?

- ☐ Single Family ☐ Duplex
☐ Townhome ☐ Condo/Multi-Family

* – Dwellings are limited to occupants on the ground floor.

Applicant Information (Mailing Address):

Street #: _____

Or PO Box _____

City: _____

Zip Code: _____

Applicant Information (for Planned New Const.):

Subdivision: _____

Section/Lot: _____

Block/Abstract: _____

Have you confirmed that the Dwelling is not located in a FEMA or locally-mapped flood plain on the FEMA website:

<https://msc.fema.gov/portal/search>

☐ **YES**, I have confirmed that the Dwelling is not located in a FEMA or locally-mapped flood plain.

PLEASE NOTE: Applicants must receive a rebate award letter from the PRPC before installing their shelter.

Rebates are Not Guaranteed

I acknowledge that:

- the submission of this form does not guarantee a rebate;
- this program provides up to 50% but no more than \$3,000.00 of the costs of purchasing & installing a residential shelter built to FEMA 320 standards;
- my property is not located in a FEMA-designated flood hazard area;
- I am voluntarily participating in this program; and,
- to the best of my knowledge, the information I've provided here is true and correct.

Signature of Homeowner

Date

Submit your completed and **signed** form to:



Panhandle Regional Planning Commission (PRPC)
Attn: Lori Gunn
PO Box 9257
Amarillo, TX 79105

FORM COMPLETION INSTRUCTIONS

Applicant Information (Name of Homeowner, Builder or Developer):

This section must be completed by the owner of the home in which the safe room would be built. Provide a response to all the fields listed.

Applicant Information (Property Information):

Provide a response to all the fields listed. List the designated 9-1-1 address of the home in which the safe room would be installed.

Property GPS Coordinates (five decimal places):

Provide the Global Positioning System (GPS) of your property. If you need assistance, please leave this section blank and PRPC staff will confirm GPS upon receipt of application.

Applicant Information (Contact Information):

Provide a response to all the fields listed. If information changes, it is the applicant's duty to report the changes to PRPC.

What type of Dwelling will this unit be installed in?

Click the box next to the option that best describes the type of dwelling in which the safe room would be built.

What type of Dwelling will this unit be installed in?

Click the box next to the option that best describes the type of dwelling in which the safe room would be built.

★ **VERY IMPORTANT: For existing homes, please include the date of the home's construction.** We may need to obtain photographs of homes built 45 years ago or more.

Applicant Information (Mailing Address):

Provide the primary address you use to receive mail.

Applicant Information (for Planned New Construction):

This Section is **only** to be completed for new homes being built. Provide a legal location description of the home in which the safe room is to be built. A separate form must be completed for each new home in which the homeowner proposes to construct a safe room/storm shelter.

Have you confirmed that the Dwelling is not located in a FEMA or locally-mapped flood plain?

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) prohibits the use of these Residential Safe Room Rebate program funds to construct safe rooms in homes that lie within a FEMA or locally-mapped flood plain. FEMA depicts designated flood hazard areas on documents referred to as Flood Insurance Rate Maps (or FIRMS). FIRMS can be viewed at: <https://msc.fema.gov/portal/search>. The information will be confirmed as part of the application review process.

Are you requesting a Rebate on a unit that has already been installed?

Shelters installed prior to notification of rebate award by PRPC are **not** eligible for rebates.

Signature of Homeowner

Read statement, then homeowner must sign and date application for it to be valid. Unsigned/undated applications will **not** be accepted.

Funding for this Residential Safe Room Rebate Program is limited. It's unlikely that every Rebate request can be met. All requests will be processed in accordance with the considerations found in the Panhandle Regional Residential Safe Room/Storm Shelter Program Guidelines.