

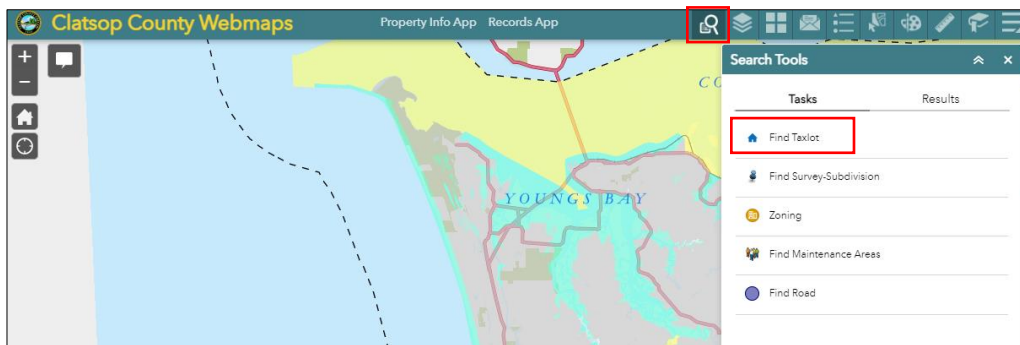


## Floodplain FAQ

### 1. How do I know if my property is in a floodplain?

Floodplain mapping can be found on Clatsop County [Webmaps](#).

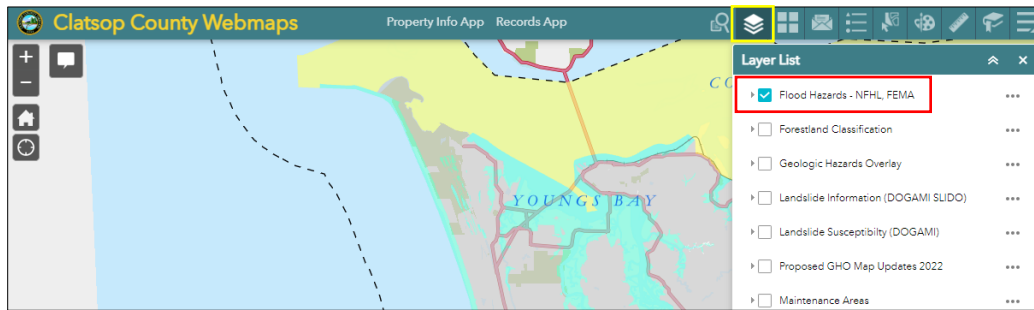
**Step 1:** Use the search function and then select *Find Taxlot*.



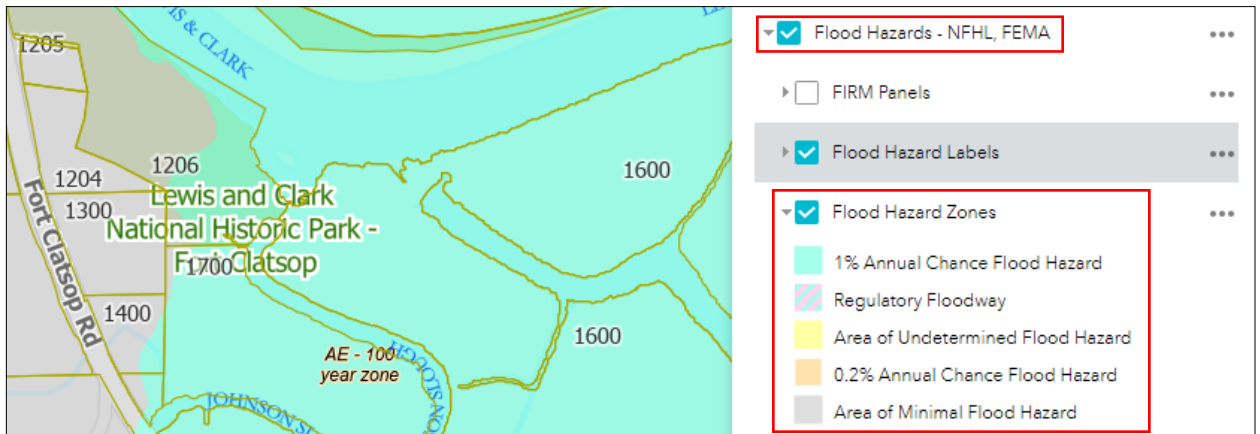
**Step 2:** Search by address, owner, or tax account ID (choose one).

The screenshot shows the 'Search Tools' panel with the 'Find Taxlot' search criteria form. The form has a 'Tasks' tab and a 'Results' tab. Under the 'Tasks' tab, the 'Find Taxlot' option is selected. The form includes several input fields for search criteria: 'Taxlotkey contains' (with the value '80908CB07100'), 'Account ID is' (with the value '12345'), 'Owner contains' (with the value 'Doe John'), and 'Address contains' (with the value '820 Exchange'). The 'Address contains' field is highlighted with a red box. Below these fields is a 'Result layer name' field with the value 'Find Taxlot\_Query result'. At the bottom of the panel is a green 'Apply' button.

**Step 3:** Select the Layers List (highlighted in yellow), then find and select the *Flood Hazards – NFHL, FEMA* layer (highlighted in red)



**Step 4:** Zooming in and using the layers list, check if your property is in a *Flood Hazard Zone*. Properties that are within the 100-year Special Flood Hazard Area must obtain a floodplain development permit prior to starting any work. A floodplain development permit is in addition to any other permits that would normally be required.



## 2. What is a Base Flood Elevation and how do I find it for my property?

Base Flood Elevation, or BFE, is the water surface elevation during the base flood. Basically, this means that it is the expected height to which flood waters will rise if there is a 100-year flood event.

You find out the BFE on your property by contacting [Clatsop County Land Use Planning](#) or by going to [FEMA's website](#) and entering your property address.

## 3. Are garden sheds and greenhouses required to be elevated?

Generally, yes, unless they qualify as exempt. For an accessory structure like a shed to qualify as exempt, it must be less than 200 square-feet in size, be used solely for parking or storage, be made of flood resistant materials, have flood vents, and more. Refer to [LAWDUC Article 5](#), Section 5.1130(2)(J) for more information on accessory structure requirements.

**4. When is flood venting required for a foundation?**

Flood venting is required for a crawlspace, or other enclosed area below the base flood elevation. For example, a first story garage with living space above it would require flood venting. Flood vents must be designed such that they permit water to flow freely into and out of the enclosed space, in order to equalize the force of water impacting your structure. Flood vents must be on at least two sides of an enclosed space and how much area devoted to flood vents is based on the size of the enclosed area that is below BFE.

**5. Does my foundation need to be engineered?**

Yes. The foundation of a structure proposed in a flood hazard area must be certified by an engineer. The foundation must be designed so as to withstand floatation, collapse, lateral movement, erosion and scour, undermining, and the effects of water and wind combined (sometimes referred to as storm surge). Refer to [LAWDUC Article 5](#), Section 5.1130 (1)(I) for more information.

**6. How much do I need to elevate my new dwelling?**

All livable space must be elevated one-foot above Base Flood Elevation (BFE).

**7. Who can sign and fill out my elevation certificate?**

An Architect, Land Surveyor, or Engineer.

**8. Does a fence require a Floodplain Development Permit?**

Yes, a floodplain development permit would be required. New fences would need to follow requirements set out in LAWDUC Section 5.1130(2)(F).

**9. How much is a Floodplain Development Permit and how long does it take to get one?**

The Floodplain Development Permit fee is \$110. Previously exempt structures do not have an application fee, but still require a Floodplain Development Permit.

*Previously Exempt Structures include:*

- A. Signs, markers, aids, etc. placed by a public agency to serve the public;*
- B. Driveways, parking lots, or other open space areas where no alteration of topography occurs;*
- C. Minor repairs or improvements to existing structures provided that the alterations do not increase the size or intensity of use, and do not constitute repair of substantial damage, or substantial improvement as defined in this section;*
- D. Customary dredging associated with routine channel maintenance consistent with State or Federal laws and permits;*

- E. Replacement of utility facilities necessary to serve established and permitted uses;*
- F. Accessory residential or non-commercial structures measuring less than 200 square feet;*
- G. Storage of equipment and material associated with residential uses.*

**10. I want to pave my driveway, does this require a Floodplain Development Permit?**

Yes, a floodplain development would be required. As a previously exempt structure there wouldn't be an application fee.

**11. Can you develop in the Floodway?**

Development can occur within a floodway. Our standards require that any proposed development within the floodway does not increase the base flood elevation up- or downstream of the proposed development. To verify this, a hydrologic & hydraulic analysis (sometimes referred to as a 'no-rise study' or 'H&H analysis') is required. The analysis must be made by a civil engineer.

While developing within the floodway is possible, owners are strongly encouraged to consider relocating outside of a floodway area, as the floodway is a hazardous area where flood waters can cause substantial damage to life and property. Structures within the floodway may also be subject to high insurance costs, please speak with an insurance agent before deciding to develop within the floodway.

**12. What is the difference between the A or AE-100-year zone, X-500-year zone, and the floodway?**

- A. The "A" in the A-100-year zone is floodplain with an unknown base flood elevation per FEMA.
- B. The "AE" in AE-100-year zone is floodplain with a known base flood elevation per FEMA.
- C. The "X-500" is the floodplain of the 500-year storm. An area expected to flood in a major weather/storm event. FEMA and Clatsop County do not require a Floodplain Development Permit to develop within this area.
- D. Floodway is the channel of a river or other watercourse. During a flood event, water will move with enough force in this mapped area to significantly damage structures. See question eight for development in the Floodway.
- E. The "VE" zone is the area adjacent to the ocean where wave action is anticipated to impact structures from storms or seismic sources. Commonly referred to as the Velocity Zone or Coastal High-Hazard Area, these areas are usually designated Zone V1-V30, VE, or V.