

# REBUILD BY DESIGN

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***For more information and to request a custom fact sheet of specific counties***

**New Jersey's Flood Risk = Financial Risk  
\$435.9B property value, \$5.9B property taxes at severe flood risk by 2050  
-- 1.3 million people live in high flood risk areas --**

*New Research breaks down New Jersey properties with high flood risk  
to understand potential migration and displacement in already tight housing market*

May 27, 2025 - As sea levels rise and storms intensify, New Jersey faces mounting risks to its people, homes, communities, and economy. Nearly 1.3 million New Jerseyans live in high flood risk areas; half of those people are lower income residents who may lack the resources to relocate out of harm's way. By 2050, nearly 1 in 6 land parcels statewide will be exposed to high flood risk, threatening \$435.9 billion in (today's) property value and \$5.9 billion in annual property tax revenue, according to a new analysis by Rebuild by Design. *(A parcel is a privately or publicly owned piece of land, recorded in tax records.)*

The report, [\*\*\*FLOOD RISK = FINANCIAL RISK: NEW JERSEY\*\*\*](#), reveals how flood exposure intersects with economic inequality and displacement risk through a parcel-level analysis, examining all 3.4 million properties statewide, including residential, commercial and industrial parcels and classifying them into displacement risk groups. The report also examines insurance rates and non-renewal risk for the state.

"New Jersey families are experiencing physical, social, and economic hardship every time it floods," **said Amy Chester, Director, Rebuild by Design**, "With the federal government cutting disaster preparedness programs, New Jersey needs reliable sources of funding to support infrastructure for communities to withstand flooding. By acting now, New Jersey can reduce the risk to lives, livelihoods, and homes, while creating good paying jobs and a safer New Jersey for generations to come."

Each parcel is classified into one of four displacement risk groups, showing who is most likely to need to relocate, and where they are likely to move, putting further pressure on a constrained

real estate market that has a **vacancy rate of 0.5% for homeowners and 3.6% for renters** (*St. Louis Fed, 2024*). In addition, some counties with the highest flood risk are also seeing higher rates of insurance non renewals, increasing financial risk for the state and its people.

### **Recommendations:**

**1) Fund Resilient Infrastructure to Make Communities Safer:** Create reliable state funding sources to adapt to sea level rise, severe storms, and extreme weather. New Jersey can raise state-level funds through a bond act or minimal surcharge on certain types of insurance to buy-down risk.

**2) Help Families Relocate Away from Risk:** Expand funding for New Jersey's *Blue Acres* voluntary buyout program to acquire homes in high-flood-prone and repetitive-flood zones, and provide case management support and social services to households opting to relocate. Such efforts can restore natural floodplains and reduce future recovery costs.

**3) Plan for Short- and Long-Term Migration:** Develop long-term strategies for managing local migration, ensuring displaced residents have access to housing, jobs, and resources in safer areas. This approach should integrate economic mobility and housing access, addressing the growing challenges of climate-induced displacement within New Jersey and from other regions.

This research builds on [Atlas of Disaster: New Jersey](#) (now updated) which found the state's 14 federal disaster declarations from 2011 - 2024 cost taxpayers more than \$7.9 billion dollars, ranking fifth highest per capita in federal assistance.

This data was released by Rebuild by Design, a project of the Institute for Public Knowledge at New York University. Special thanks to Millman for their partnership and support.

[You can view the research here.](#)

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- *To join a live briefing, Thursday, May 29th at 10am*
- *To request an interview*