

Cape Charles Resilience FAQ

What is a resilient community?

Community resilience is the capacity of a community to respond to, withstand and recover from both acute and chronic adverse situations. The goal of resilience is a vibrant, thriving community. Cape Charles faces an increasing risk of coastal hazards, risks to life and property due to flooding, high wind and shoreline erosion. To build coastal resilience, Cape Charles needs to understand its vulnerability to coastal hazards, reduce the risks where possible and be prepared to respond to severe weather.



Why should I care about resilience in Cape Charles?

Communities that work toward resilience are better able to function and maintain their viability in the aftermath of a severe weather event. Resilience planning can prevent loss of life and injury, reduce property damage, reduce business interruption, lower disaster recovery costs, protect cultural and historic assets, and reduce environmental damage. As part of building resilience, communities also may address existing chronic adverse conditions, improving quality of life everyday.

How vulnerable is Cape Charles to present and future storm impacts?

The Eastern Shore Hazard Mitigation Plan used a state of the art tool (HAZUS) to estimate damages to Cape Charles due to wind, coastal erosion, coastal flooding and stormwater flooding. The worst-case scenario for the Town is a storm that causes storm surge and pushes water into the town. All of southeastern Virginia is experiencing the highest rate of sea level rise on the east coast. Higher sea levels will increase coastal erosion and flooding in the future. Potential for inundation, flooding and shoreline change can be explored at <http://maps.coastalresilience.org/virginia/>

How will I know if my home\street is vulnerable?

All coastal areas are susceptible to flooding, therefore flood insurance is recommended for all properties in coastal Virginia. However, FEMA has mapped areas that are predicted to have a higher probability of flood. The Virginia Flood Risk Information System, which can be accessed at <http://cmap2.vims.edu/VaFloodRisk/vfris2.html>, has a tool that allows you to look up your address and displays the FEMA determined areas at higher risk of flood. (A home in the 1% area has a 26% chance of being flooded during a 30-year mortgage.)

What can I do to respond to these challenges for myself, and my community?

- Be prepared for the potential threat of flooding by purchasing flood insurance and taking measures to flood proof your property. This could mean filling in basements, installing flood vents, and elevating heating/cooling systems, for example.
- Be prepared for severe weather by having a family emergency plan (See vaemergency.gov).
- Talk with your neighbors about flood risk and encourage them to take action.
- Protecting beaches and dunes is an important action that helps to protect properties from high water and storm surges.
- Support the Town of Cape Charles in their actions to build coastal community resilience.