

## For More Information

City of Tillamook, Oregon  
[www.tillamoo.com/CityHall.html](http://www.tillamoo.com/CityHall.html)

Oregon Office of Homeland Security/  
Oregon Emergency Management  
[www.oregon.gov/OOHS/OEM](http://www.oregon.gov/OOHS/OEM)

Flood insurance information  
[www.floodsmart.gov](http://www.floodsmart.gov)

FEMA - Plan Ahead  
[www.fema.gov/plan](http://www.fema.gov/plan)

FEMA - Above the Flood: Elevating Your  
Floodprone House  
[www.fema.gov/rebuild/recover/fema347](http://www.fema.gov/rebuild/recover/fema347)

**Before beginning any construction project, citizens should consult their local building department officials to obtain the requisite permits and ensure that the project complies with local ordinances.**

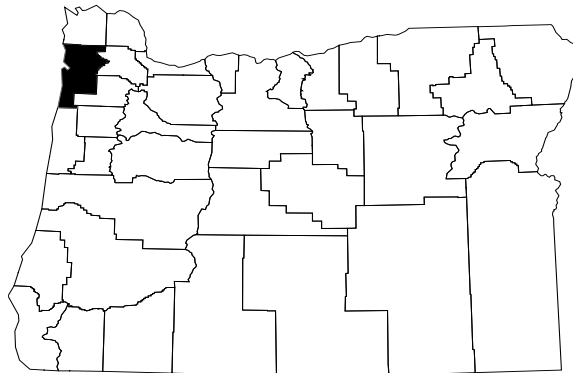


## Best Practices

FEMA-1672-DR-OR

### Motel Open for Business after Elevation

Tillamook, OR



**FEMA**



Oregon Emergency  
Management

## Motel Open for Business after Elevation

*Tillamook, OR*

During the late fall of 2006, many of the businesses along Highway 101 in north Tillamook, Oregon were inundated with flood waters. More than a month later, some business owners were still shoveling mud and debris from inside their shops. At the Western Royal Inn it was business as usual because motel owners had used flood mitigation techniques to elevate the building.

Tillamook is an outdoor lover's paradise. The native American Indian word Tillamook means "land of many waters", a perfect description for a community surrounded by Tillamook Bay on the Pacific Ocean and five rivers, the Wilson, Tillamook, Kilchis, Miami and Trask. Throughout the year, the area's natural beauty attracts locals and tourists to hike, fish, camp, and explore the beach.

This spectacular "land of many waters" is prone to frequent flooding. Local residents like Debi Smith, general manager of the Western Royal Inn, take flood warnings in stride. She's lived in this small Oregon coastal community most of her life and winter storms commonly fill the rivers and flood warnings are routine. However, on November 6, 2006, the weather outside was anything but routine. A record setting rainfall of more



*Joan Huston, FEMA Mitigation Branch Director (DR-1672), and Debi Smith, General Manager of the Western Royal Inn, discuss the fiberglass skirting used to hide the concrete block anchors.*

than 20 inches had fallen in 48 hours. Access to the motel along Highway 101 was closed due to dangerously high water.

From the window in the motel office, Smith watched the flood waters rise four feet in two hours. Some travelers who failed to heed the warnings of highway flooding found themselves stranded in their vehicles. She rushed from her office to offer help as they swam toward the safe haven of the

motel. She says her staff fed the flood victims, laundered their clothes and provided safe, dry and warm rooms until the swirling waters receded more than three days later.

The Western Royal Inn has not always been a safe haven from raging flood waters. In 1996, another violent rain storm slammed into Tillamook and other nearby coastal communities. Three feet of flood waters swamped the first floor of the motel and destroyed 20 of the 40 rooms. The motel owner struggled to keep the business open.

In 2003, MKT Investments bought the motel and began the task of repairing it with the goal of making sure that when the next big flood arrived, Western Royal Inn would stay open for business. The first task was to raise the building almost four feet. The four foot elevation requirement was determined by FEMA flood maps and the local ordinance requiring the first floor be two feet above



*Western Royal Inn before motel was elevated to prevent repetitive flood damage.*



*Concrete block system used to anchor building.*

the 100-year base flood elevation. Contractors brought in many hydraulic jacks to raise the structure and pour cement support pilings. The building was then anchored to the concrete pilings.

After the motel was anchored, work began on renovating the damaged rooms and building a ramp to provide access for disabled guests. Contractors also installed a flood-damage resistant skirting to conceal the concrete pilings. The elevation project took about six months.

Smith said the motel suffered minor flood damage during the 2006 flood event – loss of some insulation and nine inches of mud in the parking lot. Elevating the motel meant we were back in business in just a few days. Flood mitigation worked.

Photos by Art Alejandro, FEMA