



Oklahoma Department of Emergency Management

Rules & Regulations

About SoonerSafe

The *SoonerSafe - Safe Room Rebate Program* was developed by the Oklahoma Department of Emergency Management to provide a rebate for purchase and installation of safe rooms for Oklahoma homeowners.

Oklahoma is providing this safe room rebate program through the use of the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program through FEMA funds that the State receives as a result of presidentially-declared disasters.

The intent of OEM is to offer this program on an annual basis, contingent upon federal funding.

About safe rooms

For the purposes of this program, the term safe room will include any above or below ground shelter which meets or exceeds FEMA 320 guidelines for building a residential safe room. For more information about safe rooms or to download a copy of *FEMA Publication 320*, which contains recommended construction plans for safe rooms, visit the FEMA website www.fema.gov/mit/saferoom.

Safe rooms save lives. In an average year, 800 tornadoes are reported nationwide, resulting in 80 deaths and more than 1,500 injuries. A safe room provides a shield of protection for you and your family.

Safe rooms have been proven to be tremendously safe. Studies demonstrate that a safe room can survive winds as high as 250 miles per hour (*Source: FEMA Publication 320*).

How the program works

You may register for the *SoonerSafe - Safe Room Rebate Program* online at www.soonersafe.ok.gov. Registering ensures you will be considered for the program, but does not guarantee that you will receive a rebate.

The program will use a random selection process to select names so that everyone who registers will have an equal chance to be selected. For that reason, the order of registration does not improve the odds of being selected.

However, all Oklahoma homeowners whose homes were destroyed in the April 14, 2011 tornado or May 22-25, 2011 tornadoes will receive priority selection for a safe room rebate as part of this year's program, if they meet all eligibility requirements.

A maximum rebate of \$2,000 is available per home, not to exceed 75 percent of the actual cost of the safe room.

Only one person may register per physical home address.

Once you have registered, you may change your address or other information at any time. Additionally, if you change your mind, or move out of state, you may log in to your account and delete your application.

If you cannot remember your account login information, there is an option on the account login page to reset your password or username.

The randomly selected recipients will be notified on or after January 3, 2012. You will be notified if you are selected for the rebate via the email address you provide when you register. Please be sure to use an email address you check regularly. You may also log in to your account at any time to check the status.

If you are selected to receive a rebate

If your application is selected, you will have 30 days to confirm your participation. You may choose not to participate at this time, but still be eligible for future selection.

Once you have confirmed your participation, you will have until September 30, 2012 to install the safe room on your property and submit all of the required documentation verifying that your safe room meets or exceeds FEMA Publication 320 specifications.

Final required documents are under review by FEMA and the OEM.

You cannot receive your rebate before your safe room is installed. The rebate is only available as a partial reimbursement after construction is completed and you have submitted the required documentation verifying that your safe room meets or exceeds FEMA Publication 320 specifications.

Eligibility Rules

Any type of safe room is eligible for the rebate as long as it meets or exceeds the specifications set forth in FEMA Publication 320. Many local building codes require a permit and inspection by local building inspectors.

Additionally, you may have a safe room installed in a new or existing home, either in an interior room on the first floor, underground on the first floor, as a detached above-ground or underground safe room and within 100 feet of the home. Wherever you install it, the Safe room should be readily accessible to all occupants.

For this year's program, any Oklahoma homeowner whose home was destroyed in the April 14, 2011 tornado or May 22-25, 2011 tornadoes will receive priority selection for a safe room rebate, providing that all other terms and conditions for eligibility are met. You will need your FEMA case number for confirmation.

Additional eligibility rules are as follows:

- To be eligible, the safe room must be installed at primary residences and must be installed on property owned by the applicant.
- Apartment complexes, duplexes, and other multi-family residences are not eligible for this rebate, as they are considered businesses. This safe room rebate program is for single-family homes only.
- If you own two or more homes, you may only register for a safe room rebate for your primary residence.
- Community or neighborhood safe rooms are not eligible for this rebate.
- If you live in a mobile home, you must own both the mobile home itself and the land it is located on to be eligible for the rebate.
- If you live in a rented house you are not eligible for this rebate. Only single-family residential homeowners are eligible to receive the rebate for their primary residence.
- If you have already installed a safe room, or are having it installed now, that safe room is not eligible for this rebate. Previously installed safe rooms are not eligible.
- Retrofitting or repairing an existing storm shelter to meet FEMA specifications does not qualify. However, you may be eligible for a new safe room.
- If your home is in a floodplain and you have flood insurance, you may be eligible for the rebate. You would not be eligible for a below ground safe room, but you may be eligible for an above ground safe room. However, other agencies will have to approve your specific situation. You may be required to provide more information.
- If you live on historic property, or in a historic district you may be eligible for the rebate. However, other agencies will have to approve your specific situation. You may be required to provide more information.
- If your home was destroyed in a tornado and you plan to rebuild your home in a different location than your previous home you are eligible for this rebate, as long as you are building in Oklahoma and it is your primary residence.
- If your home was destroyed in Oklahoma and you are rebuilding your home out of state you are not eligible for this rebate. The safe room must be built in Oklahoma.
- You may not build or install the safe room yourself.

Additional Information

The cost of a safe room varies depending on a number of factors, including size and type of safe room. Construction industry experts estimate the cost to range from \$2,000 to \$8,000 or more.

If you receive this rebate you will not have to claim it as income on your taxes. The safe room rebate is exempt from tax liability as a federally-funded assistance program.

The Oklahoma Constitution provides that up to 100 square feet of a safe room installed after January 1, 2002 shall be exempt from taxation.

There are no State or Federal tax incentives associated with this safe room rebate program at this time.