

Flood Openings for Equalization

What are Flood Openings for Equalization?

Where flood depths are significant, a building could be at risk of structural damage or even collapsing from the force of water acting against the side of the building.

Flood openings allow water to enter the building interior to balance or equalize the force of water acting against the outside of the building.

These are typically in the form of screened or vented openings in the exterior walls that will allow floodwater to quickly enter a building, and quickly drain out of the building following a flood to equalize the forces acting on the exterior walls.

Where can they be installed?

Flood openings for equalization are appropriate for buildings that could be subjected to significant depths of flooding during severe storm events.

It is best suited to buildings where there will typically be relatively few occupants and can be evacuated quickly when flooding is imminent. It is also suitable where materials and equipment inside the structure would not be damaged by flooding and/or could be stored or easily moved to above-ground locations ahead of a flood.

What else should you know about Flood Openings for Equalization?

This technique does not protect against water damage during a flood, as it relies on flooding the interior of a building quickly to protect it against major structural damage.

Building contents will continue to be at risk of flooding. There should also be a robust emergency management plan in place to ensure that building occupants will not be trapped in the building when floodwater rapidly enters through the equalization openings.

Cost Range

\$85 to \$100 per opening.

What type of protection do they provide?

Flood openings Provide Passive Wet Protection.



Non Residential structure retrofitted with flood

openings (source: *fema.gov*)