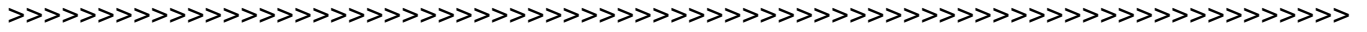
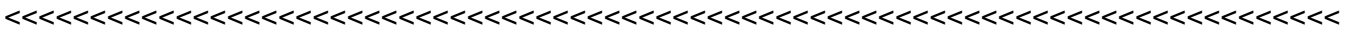


# WEST CENTRAL TEXAS REGIONAL



# RESIDENTIAL SAFE ROOM PROGRAM GUIDELINES AND APPLICATION FORM



**RELEASED: August 2011**

*Funding for this program made possible by the Governor's Division of Emergency Management and the  
Federal Emergency Management Agency*


**West Central Texas Regional Residential Safe Room/Storm Shelter Rebate Program Guidelines**

The West Central Texas Council of Governments (WCTCOG) is pleased to announce the West Central Texas Residential Safe Room/Storm Shelter Rebate Program. This program is being funded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) through the Governor’s Division of Emergency Management (GDEM). It is a fairly straightforward program which can best be explained by breaking down the key elements of the program’s title.

**West Central Texas Regional** – This program is intended to serve the 19-county area of state planning region 7. These counties include: Brown, Callahan, Coleman, Comanche, Eastland, Fisher, Haskell, Kent, Knox, Jones, Mitchell, Nolan, Runnels, Scurry, Shackelford, Stephens, Stonewall, Taylor, and Throckmorton. This regional program will primarily benefit West Central Texas residents.

**Residential** – The FEMA/GDEM program rules state that the applicants must be the owner occupant, builder or developer of the home in which the safe room/storm shelter is to be built. The rules also require that the home be a single-family dwelling that lies outside a FEMA or locally mapped floodplain. In limited situations, this program can assist with the installation of safe rooms/storm shelters in multi-family dwellings (town homes and/or condominiums) provided the units are exclusively for occupants on a ground floor.

**Safe Room/Storm Shelter** – For the purpose of this program, a safe room/storm shelter is an above or below ground unit built to the standards set by the National Storm Shelter Association (NSSA) and American Tornado Shelter Association (ATSA). Such a unit will be able to withstand the force of 250 mph ground level wind speeds and absorb the impact of a 15 lb. 2X4 traveling at the speed of 100 miles per hour. This represents worst-case tornadoes rated as EF-5 on the Enhanced Fujita Scale.

	Category	Wind Speed	Potential Damages
	EF-5: Devastating Tornado	>200 mph	Well-constructed houses leveled; structures with weak foundations blown off some distance; cars thrown and large missiles generated.

*The only units authorized for rebate support under this program will be units certified as meeting the NSSA and ATSA standards.*

**Rebate Program** – This is a 50:50 matching program that will provide home owners, developers and builders a rebate of up to \$3,000 to offset the cost of installing an NSSA or ATSA certified safe room/storm shelter in a residence. Home owners, developers and builders must first apply for a rebate and then receive a written confirmation of rebate award from the WCTCOG before being assured of receiving this assistance.

The steps for requesting and potentially receiving a rebate are described below.

**Step 1:** *You should determine if the residence in which the safe room/storm shelter would be installed lies in a FEMA or locally-mapped floodplain.*

FEMA prohibits the use of these rebate dollars to support the cost of installing safe rooms or storm shelters in residences that lie inside a floodplain. For the purpose of this requirement, homes built within a FEMA designated Special Flood Hazard Area(s) are considered to be in the floodplain.

There are a several ways in which this determination can be made. Rebate applicants can:

1. Contact their local city code enforcement officer or county floodplain administrator to determine if their property is in a Special Flood Hazard Area; or
2. Go to FEMA's website at <http://msc.fema.gov/webapp/wcs/> and search for the property under the button marked Map Search. If you conduct your own map search your property is ineligible if it lies inside one of the colored or highlighted Special Flood Hazard areas shown on the FEMA map; or
3. Contact your Homeowners Insurance Policy Provider and request a Standard Flood Hazard Determination Form; or

**Step 2:** *On the Rebate Application form, you'll certify, by signature, that you are the owner occupant, builder, or developer of the residence in which the unit is to be installed. These terms are defined below.*

- *Owner occupant* – you legally own the home and currently live in the residence in which the unit will be installed.
- *Builder* – You're building the home in which the unit will be installed either for your own occupancy or as a contractor for another owner occupant/developer.
- *Developer* – You're developing a property or properties, contracting with a builder to install a unit in a residence for sale to another owner occupant.

**Step 3:** *Complete and submit your rebate application.*

The application will take about 5 minutes to complete. You **must** print and fill-out form then mail it to our office to the address printed below. The original signed form must be submitted (no copies or faxes) because this will serve as your certification that the information contained in the application is true.

Submit your completed form to:

West Central Texas Council of Governments  
Attn: Wendy Patterson  
3650 Loop 322  
Abilene, TX 79602

Your application will be placed on a Waiting List, if selected for rebate, you will receive a letter of notification from the WCTCOG authorizing you to proceed with the unit installation. If you're

applying for a unit installed after that date and your application is selected for rebate, you will receive a letter of notification from the WCTCOG stating that you will receive a rebate on the already-installed unit if all other conditions of the rebate program are met (jump to **Step 5**).

**Step 4:** *Identify the ATSA or NSSA-certified contractor who will provide and install the unit in your home.*

As with anything else, safe rooms/storm shelters come in a variety of shapes and sizes. Some sit above ground, others lie below ground. However, for the purpose of this program and because it is a requirement of the GDEM, any unit on which a rebate is paid under this program must be certified by the American Tornado Shelter Association (ATSA) or National Storm Shelter Association (NSSA).

The NSSA maintains the current list of certified contractors on its website at: [www.nssa.cc](http://www.nssa.cc). The listing can be found under the "Membership Roster" option found in the left-hand column of the website's home page. Residents are encouraged to contact several of the contractors listed to determine which unit will best suit their needs.

Of all the steps listed in these guidelines, this one is perhaps the most important. An ATSA or NSSA-approved seal bearing a unique serial number will be issued for each safe room/storm shelter installed. This seal will stand as proof that your unit does in fact meet ATSA or NSSA standards. Only units that meet ATSA or NSSA standards will bear this seal and without the seal, no rebate(s) can be made.

**Step 5:** *Complete the installation of the unit and submit your documentation per the instructions provided in the WCTCOG letter of notification you received authorizing you to proceed with the unit installation.*

To enable the WCTCOG to process the rebate, you will need to submit the following record documents once the unit has been installed:

- A signed statement from you that your participation in this program has been strictly voluntary (a copy is shown in the guideline attachments);
- A copy of the ATSA or NSSA shelter seal number certificate from the unit installed; and
- copies of all invoices received and payments made by the applicant.

FEMA/GDEM requires that the coordinate positioning of each home receiving a unit under this program be recorded. As a step in the rebate payment process, WCTCOG staff will make a visit to each unit site, verify the existence of the unit and record the longitude/latitude coordinates of the residence in which the unit has been installed. The street address of the residence will be provided to the local 9-1-1 dispatch to speed potential search and rescue operations following a storm(s). As a provision of rebate payment, the owner occupant, builder or developer will have to agree to this data gathering step by the WCTCOG.

## WEST CENTRAL TEXAS REGIONAL SAFE ROOM PROGRAM

### ~ Regional Program Target Goals ~

#### **How will the rebates be made?**

Unless otherwise instructed by the owner/developer/builder, once the safe room/storm shelter installation has been successfully completed, the rebate payment will be made to the ATSA or NSSA certified contractor who installed the unit. How will this work? Here is an example.

*A certified contractor installs a safe room for a WCTCOG-approved applicant for a total cost of \$4,500.00. The contractor presents the invoice to the owner. (Remember, this is a 50:50 match program with the maximum rebate amount being \$3,000.00.) So, the owner will pay the contractor \$2,250.00 and then submit the documents listed under Step 5 above to the WCTCOG. Once the WCTCOG has verified the existence of the shelter and confirmed its ATSA or NSSA certification, a check will be sent to the contractor in the amount of \$2,250.00.*

If the owner/developer/builder chooses to pay the ATSA or NSSA-certified contractor in full and then submit the necessary rebate documents to the WCTCOG, the rebate payment will be made to the owner/developer/builder. The payment election will be made at the time the rebate documents are submitted to the WCTCOG by the owner/developer/builder.

Once the WCTCOG has received all the documents specified above, it will take 30 to 45 days to conduct the site visit and remit the rebate payment to the appropriate party.

#### **Who can I contact for more information about this program?**

For more information about this program, please contact Wendy Patterson at the WCTCOG by calling (325) 672-1197.

ATTACHMENT 1

# REBATE APPLICATION FORM

Program Guideline Attachment

# West Central Texas Residential Safe Room/Storm Shelter Program

## Rebate Application Form

The West Central Texas Regional Residential Safe Room/Storm Shelter Program is being funded from a grant provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) through the Governors Division of Emergency Management (GDEM). This is a rebate program designed to help homeowners and developers offset the cost of installing above or below ground shelters, meeting the standards set by the National Storm Shelter Association (NSSA) and American Tornado Shelter Association (ATSA), in homes throughout the 19 counties of West Central Texas. Application completion instructions are below, on page 2.

Completion of this application form simply serves as your notice of interest and desire to participate in this program. Your application will be processed in accordance with the criteria established in the West Central Texas Regional Residential Safe Room/Storm Shelter Rebate Program Guidelines. Please submit your application per the instructions given below. Should you have any questions, please contact Wendy Patterson at (325) 672-1197.

### Applicant Information (Home Owner Name):

Mr. or Ms.?: \_\_\_\_\_

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Suffix: \_\_\_\_\_

### Applicant Information (Mailing Address):

Street #: \_\_\_\_\_

Or PO Box: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

### Applicant Information (Contact Information):

Day Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Or Cell: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### Applicant Information (Property Information):

911 Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

### Applicant Information (for Developers Only):

Subdivision: \_\_\_\_\_

Section/Lot: \_\_\_\_\_

Block/Abstract: \_\_\_\_\_

Submit your completed and **signed** form to:

West Central Texas Council of Governments  
Attn: Wendy Patterson  
3650 Loop 322  
Abilene, Texas 79602

### What type of Dwelling will this unit be installed in?

Mobile Home: \_\_\_\_\_

Existing Single-family: \_\_\_\_\_

Existing Multi-Family: \* \_\_\_\_\_

Planned New Construction: \_\_\_\_\_

If New Construction, what type is planned?  
\_\_\_\_\_

\* Owner occupied multi-family dwellings such as \_\_\_\_\_ s  
condominiums or town homes are limited to \_\_\_\_\_ to  
occupants on the ground floor.

### Have you confirmed that the Dwelling is not located in a FEMA or locally-mapped flood plain?

YES, I have confirmed that the Dwelling is not located in a FEMA or locally-mapped flood plain.

### Are you requesting a Rebate on a unit that has already been installed?

YES  NO

If YES, what date was the unit installation complete? \_\_\_\_\_

If YES, which contractor installed the unit?  
\_\_\_\_\_

If YES, did the contractor provide you with an \_\_\_\_\_ NSSA certification for the unit?

YES  NO

*I, the undersigned, have carefully reviewed this form and the Program Guidelines and understand the information therein. To the best of my knowledge and belief the information I have provided on this form is true and accurate.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Owner or Developer      Date

## FORM COMPLETION INSTRUCTIONS

### **Applicant Information (Home Owner Name):**

This section must be completed by the owner of the home in which the safe room would be built. Provide a response to all the fields listed. Write "N/A" if a field does not apply.

### **Applicant Information (Mailing Address):**

Provide the primary address you use to receive mail.

### **Applicant Information (Contact Information):**

Provide a response to all the fields listed. Write "N/A" if a field does not apply.

### **Applicant Information (Property Information):**

Provide a response to all the fields listed. List the designated 9-1-1 address of the home in which the safe room would be installed.

### **Applicant Information (for Developers Only):**

This Section is **only** to be completed for new homes being built by developers/builders. Provide a legal location description of the home in which the safe room is to be built. A separate form must be completed for each new home in which the developer/builder proposes to construct a safe room/storm shelter.

### **What type of Dwelling will this unit be installed in?**

Write "Yes" next to the option that best describes the type of dwelling in which the safe room would be built.

### **Have you confirmed that the Dwelling is not located in a FEMA or locally-mapped flood plain?**

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) prohibits the use of these Residential Safe Room Rebate program funds to construct safe rooms in homes that lie within a FEMA or locally-mapped flood plain. Applicants must ensure that the homes in which the safe room is to be installed lies outside of a designated flood plain. FEMA depicts designated flood hazard areas on documents referred to as Flood Insurance Rate Maps (or FIRMS). FEMA FIRMS can be viewed at: <http://msc.fema.gov/webapp/wcs/> under the button (on the top banner) marked [Map Search](#). The information provided here by the applicant will be confirmed as part of the application review process.

### **Are you requesting a Rebate on a unit that has already been installed?**

The start of this Residential Safe Room Rebate Program has been retroactively set at April 16, 2009. Any units installed in the 19 county area of the West Central Texas after that date **may** be eligible for rebate of up to \$3,000.00 provided:

1. The home in which the safe room was installed lies outside a FEMA or locally-mapped flood plain;
2. The unit was installed by a contractor/vendor certified by the National Storm Shelter Association (NSSA);
3. The unit that was installed has been issued an NSSA certification; and
4. The application was selected for participation in this rebate program.

*Funding for this Residential Safe Room Rebate Program is limited. It's unlikely that every Rebate request can be met. All requests will be processed in accordance with the considerations found in the West Central Texas Residential Safe Room/Storm Shelter Program Guidelines*

ATTACHMENT 2

# PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Program Guideline Attachment

**Program Implementation Schedule ATTACHMENT 3**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Implementation Activity</b>
June 16, 2009	Announced Start Date of the West Central Texas Regional Residential Safe Room/Storm Shelter Rebate program. This is the date on which the WCTCOG will officially begin receiving applications for rebates. Applicants can submit rebate requests for NSSA-certified units installed after April 16, 2009 or for units that yet to be installed.
February 28, 2012	Deadline for submission of Residential Safe Room Rebate applications. Applications must be received by 4:00 p.m. on this date in order to be eligible for participation.
On-going	WCTCOG will complete the first come first serve selections for all rooms currently available.
On-going	Texas Historical Commission (THC) review submission. By law, the THC must review each property scheduled to receive a safe room/shelter to ensure it is not a historic property. THC says it may need up to 30 days to finish a review process. To expedite the process, WCTCOG intends to submit all properties to THC at the same time.
On-going	Once the THC has cleared the properties, WCTCOG will issue each selected homeowner a letter confirming the award of their requested rebate.
On-going	It is anticipated that there will be more applications received than there are rooms available. WCTCOG will maintain a record of unmet requests in the order in which they were selected. Should a previously selected homeowner later decide to decline the rebate or should GDEM provide additional funding for this program, other residents will be selected, in the order in which their applications were received, for rebate.
April 16, 2012	The regional program will have to be concluded by this date; any receipts submitted for payment after this date will not be paid by the WCTCOG

ATTACHMENT 3

# VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION STATEMENT

\* *This form will have to be signed and submitted as part of the rebate payment process.*

## Signed Statement of Voluntary Participation

As witnessed by my signature below, I \_\_\_\_\_, owner, developer, or builder of the residence located at \_\_\_\_\_, in \_\_\_\_\_ hereby certify that my participation in the West Central Texas Regional Residential Safe Room/Storm Shelter Rebate Program has been voluntary. I further authorize the WCTCOG to visit my residence to physically verify the room has been constructed, to record the affixed NSSA or ATSA seal number on the installed safe room/storm shelter and to the capture of the required Lat/Long information on the shelter location as required by FEMA.

Along with this statement, I am also submitting the following documents necessary to process the rebate payment for my safe room/storm shelter:

- the ATSA or NSSA shelter seal number from the unit installed which is \_\_\_\_\_ ; and
- copies of all invoices received and payments by me for my safe room/storm shelter.

Based on the invoice/payment information I've submitted with this statement, I elect to have the

rebate payment of \$ \_\_\_\_\_<sup>1</sup> paid to \_\_\_\_\_<sup>2</sup>.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Owner/Developer/Builder

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

<sup>1</sup> – 50% of the documented invoice cost in an amount not to exceed \$3,000.00.

<sup>2</sup> – If the owner/developer/builder has documented that all invoices have already been paid in full then fill in the name of the owner/developer/builder. If any portion of the invoice costs has not been fully paid to the safe room/storm shelter contractor/installer then list the name of the contractor/installer who is to receive the rebate payment.