Subject: Important Building Code Change:

Increase in minimum floor elevation one- and two family residential dwellings effective January 1, 2018.

As of January 1, 2018, all one- and two- family residential dwellings located in flood hazard areas must be built an additional twelve inches higher than current requirements. The so-called twelve-inch freeboard requirement, adopted in this 6th edition of the Florida Building Code, has been adopted as of January 1, 2018. All building permits applied for, on and after this date must comply with this new requirement.

This mandatory requirement provides that the floor elevation of all one and two-family residential dwellings located in flood hazard areas be built at base flood elevation plus twelve inches. This is an additional twelve inches higher than was required before January 1, 2018 and the 6th edition of the Building Codes. The changes reflect changes to International Codes submitted by FEMA to agree with ASCE 24 as published by the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE). ASCE 24 was adopted into the Florida Building Code, as an alternate and in some cases as the mandatory requirement, for the design of structures in flood hazard areas of which Collier County is defined.

These requirements are set out in the Residential Code, Section R322.2.1. As stated in the Florida Building Code Sixth Edition, "...buildings and structures constructed in whole or in part in flood hazard areas shall be designed and constructed in accordance with Sections R322.2.1 through R322.2.3."