

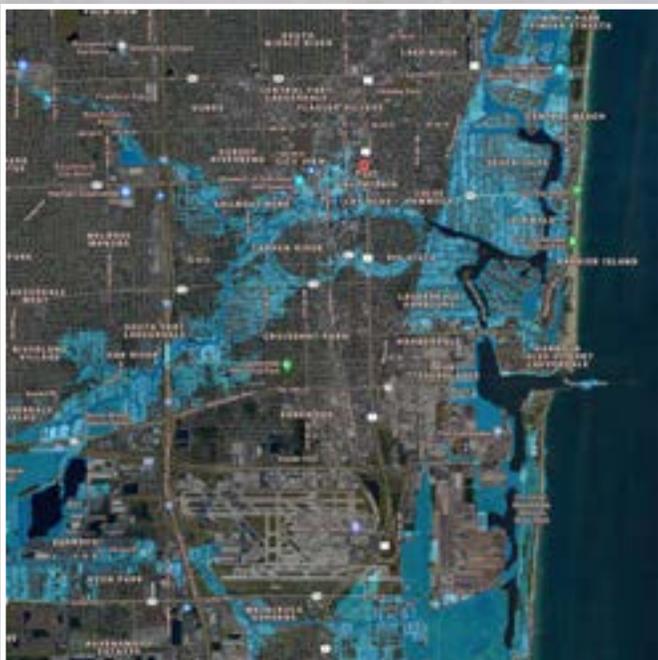
“Members should incorporate adaptation strategies with their clients to anticipate extreme weather events and minimize adverse effects on the environment, economy and public health.”

AIA Code of Ethics

SEA LEVELS ARE RISING IT'S TIME TO TAKE ACTION

UNDERSTANDING SEA LEVEL RISE

Sea level rise is a symptom of climate change. As global temperatures rise due to the increase of greenhouse gases in the Earth's atmosphere, polar ice caps and glaciers are melting. In addition, the world's oceans are expanding as they heat up, causing ocean levels to rise. Sea level rise is not uniform around our planet. Factors such as tides and ocean currents can increase sea level rise in a particular area, such as Florida. A National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration tidal gauge in Key West has logged about 9 inches¹ of sea level rise over the past century, with 3.9 inches² occurring between 2000-2017, confirming that the rate of sea level rise is accelerating. Below is a map showing the projected flooding in the Fort Lauderdale area based on the projected additional 40 inches of sea level rise by 2070².



COURTESY OF CLIMATE CENTRAL

FACTS

- Higher sea levels cause saltwater intrusion into our freshwater aquifers, contaminating drinking water.
- Increasing groundwater levels will increase seasonal flooding even in inland areas, affecting most of the state.
- Increasing groundwater levels will damage underground infrastructure (storm and sewage lines, cables, and more) and building foundations.
- Many low-wealth communities are located in low-lying areas exposed to greater risk of flooding.
- Freshwater plants and wildlife will lose their habitats due to seawater intrusion.
- Drainage outfalls will be below future water levels.

TALKING POINTS FOR CLIENTS

- It is estimated that the flood risk in Florida could devalue exposed homes by \$30 billion to \$80 billion, or 15% to 35%, by 2050, leaving lenders and reinsurers with potentially catastrophic financial losses.³
- Above-code design for new construction could save \$4 per \$1 of cost. Building codes set minimum requirements to protect life safety. More strict requirements can cost effectively boost life safety and speed functional recovery.⁴

RESOURCES FOR ACTION

- [How to integrate resilience into your practice - AIA](#)
- [The Fundamentals of Resilient & Climate Adaptive Design - AIA](#)
- [Framework for Design Excellence - AIA](#)
- [Sustainability - AIA](#)
- [Resilience and Adaptation Certificate Series - AIA](#)
- [Blueprint for Better - AIA](#)