



Texas Windstorm Insurance Association

PRESS RELEASE

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BUILDING CODES WORK DURING TEXAS HURRICANES, STUDY REVEALS

The Texas Windstorm Insurance Association (TWIA) studied 9,835 reported claims on residential dwellings damaged in Hurricane Rita. The analysis focused on whether dwellings built to the new, stricter building codes had less damage than those that were not built to the new building codes. Two issues were researched: the percent of claims reported compared to the total number of dwellings insured and the average paid loss for those claims reported.

“The study, which included the counties most affected by Rita, Jefferson, Chambers and Galveston, showed that there were far fewer claims reported for dwellings built to the new codes and the average paid loss per dwelling was 40-50 percent less”, according to Sandra Helin, a spokesman for TWIA.

“This study, while limited, clearly points out that the new building codes do help prevent property damage during a hurricane”, Helin added. “Hurricane Rita offered TWIA its first opportunity to have a sufficient number of claims in a particular area so that the company could judge whether the new building codes were working as intended.”

“It is clear that the building codes work and that their use should be expanded and become mandatory throughout the entire seacoast territory,” she said.

The 70th Texas Legislature enacted legislation that says that all new construction, repairs and/or additions that commenced on or after January 1, 1998 shall be inspected or approved by the Texas Department of Insurance for compliance with the building code specifications in the TWIA Plan of Operation. Participation in this program is not mandatory, however, property that has not been inspected and certified in accordance with the requirements of this inspection program will not be eligible for windstorm insurance through TWIA.