

*New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection*

*Application for Sale*

**BLUE ACRES PROGRAM**

*A program to acquire flood-prone land in the State of New Jersey,  
and to dedicate those lands that are purchased for recreation and conservation purposes.*

*Thank you for your interest in selling your property through the Blue Acres Program.*



**For more information contact:**

**NJDEP Green Acres Program  
Mail Code 501-01  
P.O. Box 420  
Trenton, NJ 08625-0420  
Tel: (609) 984-0500; Fax: (609) 984-0608  
Web: [www.nj.gov/dep/greenacres](http://www.nj.gov/dep/greenacres)**

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**  
**New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection**  
**Superstorm Sandy Blue Acres Buyout Program**

**What is the NJDEP Superstorm Sandy Blue Acres Buyout Program?**

The Blue Acres Program is the part of New Jersey's Green Acres Program that purchases flood-prone properties. Through the DEP's Superstorm Sandy Blue Acres Buyout Program, the State will spend \$300 million in federal disaster recovery funds to give homeowners the option to sell Sandy-damaged homes at pre-storm value in flood-prone areas. The program is designed to give homeowners the ability to choose the best option for their individual situation.

The State will buy clusters of homes or whole neighborhoods that were flooded in Superstorm Sandy or previous storms. These homes will be demolished, and the land will be permanently preserved as open space, accessible to the public, for recreation or conservation. The preserved land will serve as natural buffers against future storms and floods. The goal of the Blue Acres Program is to dramatically reduce the risk of future catastrophic flood damage, and to help families to move out of harm's way.

**How many homes will get buyouts? How much money is available?**

The State will use \$300 million in federal disaster recovery funds to purchase up to 1300 homes: approximately 1,000 properties in tidal areas affected by Sandy, and another 300 properties in other towns, such as Manville and communities in the Passaic River Basin, that have flooded repeatedly.

**What parts of the State are eligible for buyouts? Is it just at the Shore?**

Superstorm Sandy devastated many New Jersey communities, and buyouts will not be limited to the Shore. The Blue Acres Program is currently evaluating Sandy-impacted and flood-prone communities throughout the State, including neighborhoods near the coast, bay shores, rivers and tributaries.

**Where are buyouts underway? How many homes have been approved so far? How many have been completed?**

Since Governor Christie launched the buyout program on May 16, 2013, 719 homes in ten municipalities in six counties have been approved for buyouts. Buyouts are currently underway in Sayreville, South River, Woodbridge, East Brunswick, Newark, Old Bridge, Linden, Manville, Pompton Lakes, and Lawrence (Cumberland County). Blue Acres has made offers on more than 690 homes, has had nearly 519 offers accepted by homeowners, has completed more than 380 closings, and has completed nearly 243 demolitions.

DEP is continuing to expand the Blue Acres program to other communities that were flooded in Superstorm Sandy and previous storms, and is working with residents and local officials to

**How much money will I get for my home? Can I appeal the appraisal? Is the State's offer open to negotiation?**

An independent licensed appraiser hired by the State will conduct a property appraisal. The appraisal will be based on the value of the property before Sandy (the "pre-storm value"). This appraisal will be the basis for the amount offered for the home. Homeowners can appeal the appraisal. The appraisal appeal process adds about three months to the buyout process. Unlike most real estate transactions, the amount of the offer is not open for negotiation. The homeowner must accept or reject the State's offer.

**Do I have to be a U.S. Citizen to qualify for a buyout?**

No. However, at least one member of the household must be a citizen, non-citizen national or qualified alien of the United States in order for Blue Acres to offer pre-storm value for the home. This is a Federal requirement.

**Will it cost me anything to participate?**

The cost to homeowners is minimal. Federal and State funding will cover the majority of the costs associated with the buyout process, including the cost of the appraisal, title search, environmental review, survey, actual purchase and demolition.

The homeowner must pay for an attorney to represent him or her at closing. The homeowner must pay to resolve any outstanding environmental issues. For example, if there is an underground storage tank on the property, the homeowner must pay to have the tank removed. The homeowner must pay to resolve any outstanding liens on the property, such as open mortgages and tax liens. If a homeowner chooses to appeal the appraisal, he or she must pay for the second appraisal.

**Will there be a lot of red tape?**

DEP has created a special team to work closely with willing sellers and process their applications as quickly as possible. Case managers are working with individual homeowners personally to help guide them through the buyout process as quickly and painlessly as possible. DEP must be a responsible steward of public funds, so paperwork and documentation are unavoidable. But, the State will do its best to smooth the way and minimize red tape.

**I heard Governor Christie say that the State will only buy out whole neighborhoods, not houses here and there. What if many neighbors want to sell, but there are one or two holdouts who don't want a buyout? Will the State back out of the deal to buy my house?**

No, the State won't back out of the deal. There is no need to worry about a few holdouts. DEP focuses on clusters of homes and entire neighborhoods in order to submit strong, cost-effective grant applications to FEMA and HUD, and because that is the best way to reduce future risk of catastrophic flood damage. That being said, once a community or cluster has been identified for buyouts, DEP will not back out, even if a few neighbors decide not to participate. If the

# Application for Blue Acres Acquisition

Return to:

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Mail Code 501 -01, P.O. Box 420  
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Web: [www.nj.gov/dep/greenacres](http://www.nj.gov/dep/greenacres)

For G.A. Use Only

Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_

Application Number: \_\_\_\_\_

## A. Owner Information

Property Owner's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Daytime Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Full name

Co-Owner's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Daytime Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Full name

Property Owner's Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State & Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Property Owner's E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

If applicable, check if the property is owned by a(n): Estate \_\_\_\_\_ Partnership \_\_\_\_\_ Corporation \_\_\_\_\_

If you wish to designate someone to act as your representative, please complete Section C.

## B. Property Information

Municipality: \_\_\_\_\_ County: \_\_\_\_\_

Please provide the following information, which is available from your most recent tax bill(s):

Block #	Lot #	Assessed Value	Farmland Assessed?	Annual Property Taxes	Acres per Lot
_____	_____	\$ _____	Yes / No _____	\$ _____	_____
_____	_____	\$ _____	Yes / No _____	\$ _____	_____
_____	_____	\$ _____	Yes / No _____	\$ _____	_____

(Use back of application if more space needed.)

Total Acres: \_\_\_\_\_

Property Address (e.g. 123 Main St): \_\_\_\_\_

What is your asking price for this property (required)? \_\_\_\_\_

\*NOTE: While the asking price is a key element in the evaluation of this property, it is non-binding, and is not a commitment on the part of the State of New Jersey to pay this amount should this property be selected for acquisition.

Date you acquired title to the property: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of last flood event: \_\_\_\_\_

Were there any structures located on the property at the time of the last flood event? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

If yes, what type of structure? Single Family Residential: \_\_\_\_\_ Commercial (describe): \_\_\_\_\_

(check all that apply) Multi Family Residential: \_\_\_\_\_ Other (shed, garage, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

Was this structure someone's primary residence at time of last flood event? Yes: \_\_\_\_\_ No: \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, what type? Owner-occupied \_\_\_\_\_ Rental: \_\_\_\_\_ Both: \_\_\_\_\_

Current use of property: \_\_\_\_\_

Have any commercial activities ever taken place on this property? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Are there any leases, rental agreements, easements or deed restrictions affecting the property? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Are there any mortgages or liens on the property? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Have you ever applied here or elsewhere to sell this property for preservation? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

If yes to any of above, please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

What is the name of the closest water body? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have a completed elevation certificate? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Is the property insured with a flood insurance policy under the National Flood Insurance Program? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Have you received a flood claim payment from National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Have you pursued, or are you pursuing, any subdivision or development approvals on the property? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

If yes, please describe purpose: \_\_\_\_\_

Is the property currently listed for sale with a realtor? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

If yes, please provide name and phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Please tell us about your property, including any unique or special environmental features, known historical associations, and any bodies of water on the property or bordering the property. (Use back of application if more space needed.)

**C. Representative Information:** *Only complete this section if you want someone other than yourself to be the primary contact:*

Do you authorize a person to act as your representative in all matters pertaining to this application? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

What is this person's relationship to you (i.e., family member, realtor, attorney, Power of Attorney)? \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Representative: \_\_\_\_\_

Representative's Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Representative: \_\_\_\_\_

**D. Optional Attachments**

*Please provide copies of the following documents, if available:*

Deed of Property: \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No Title Insurance Policy: \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Photos of Damaged Structures: \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No Survey: \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Elevation Certificate: \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No Other (describe): \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

**E. Owner Certification**

I hereby certify that the information included in this application is true, that I am the legal owner of the property described above, that I have marketable title to the property and that I have the legal right to sell the property. I hereby authorize the staff of the Green Acres Program, or their designee, to conduct such site inspections on the property as are necessary to this application. I understand that the State will not use its eminent domain authority to acquire the property for open-space purposes if I choose not to participate, or if negotiations fail.

Note: All persons having an ownership interest must sign as owners (Use back of application if more space needed). Pursuant to P. L. 2005, C.51; certain political contributions exceeding \$300 may preclude the State from purchasing the landowner's property. For more information, please consult [www.state.nj.us/treasury/purchase/execorder134.htm](http://www.state.nj.us/treasury/purchase/execorder134.htm) or contact us.

Signature of Owner (Applicant)

Date

Signature of Owner (Co-Applicant)

Date