

Special Considerations: Basements

- Adopted verbatim and appropriately incorporated into all four degree of damage categories in Michigan Damage Assessment Handbook
- **FEMA wrote:** “When assessing the damage to a home, consideration must be given when the home has a basement. For a home with a basement, several variables would need to be identified in order to estimate the degree of damage to the home. Some variables would include: water depth in relation to utilities, structural damage to walls, and foundation and support structures. It is also important to note the uses of the basement, when possible, because FEMA only provides assistance for rooms required for occupation of the dwelling (i.e., occupied bedrooms, bathrooms required for occupied bedrooms, a sole kitchen or living room, or when no other room in another part of the dwelling meets the need). Recreational and other common areas of the basement are not considered required rooms. Additional factors to consider which could affect the safety of the occupants of the home are: severely damaged structural components; and severe damage to or complete failure of major mechanical or electrical utilities.”
- **FEMA defines basement as:** “Any area of a building where the floor is below ground level on all sides. Split level homes, below ground level condominiums, and sunken living areas are excluded from the definition of a basement.”

