

Take a Second Look

A guide to your
homeowners insurance



Know your policy

Study the declarations page to be certain the information is correct. Please contact us for a review of your policy.

Coverage amount

Is the amount of coverage adequate for you to rebuild your home? If you have recently made alterations and/or additions to your home, you may need to increase your coverage. We recommend insuring your home for 100% of its reconstruction cost.

Outbuildings

If you have a detached garage or any other outbuildings on your property, these are usually insured up to 10% of the coverage on your home. Is this coverage adequate? Farm-type buildings or buildings used for business may not qualify for coverage under your homeowners policy. Please ask us to quote these buildings separately if you would like to have them covered.

Business, farming, rentals, etc.

If you run a business in your home (such as Pampered Chef, Mary Kay, Tupperware, music lessons, or internet sales); operate a day care; conduct farming activities; own rental property, seasonal dwelling, boat, snowmobile, or other recreational vehicles; you may not have adequate property or liability protection. We can help you evaluate these coverages.

Home associations

Take extra precaution if you are a part of a condo or homeowner association. If the association purchases an insurance policy for common owned property or liability; all unit owners may be held responsible for any liability or damage to common property in excess of the policy limits. Policies and endorsements are available to protect you in these situations.

Identity theft

Some companies are now offering coverage to help pay for some of the expenses incurred by identity theft. Please call us if you are interested in more information.

Ordinance or law

Building codes are constantly changed and updated. Houses in total compliance just a few years ago may no longer meet your community's current building code requirements.

Any lack of compliance, although unintentional, could be costly following a major loss to your home. Standard, unendorsed homeowners policies provide a limited amount of coverage to pay for additional costs caused by the building inspector's insistence that your entire home be brought into full compliance with local building codes following a loss.

By itself, Ordinance or Law amount may not give you enough coverage to accomplish these requirements. Any amount above the Ordinance or Law coverage will have to be paid by YOU.

You do have the option to increase your protection from this out-of-pocket expense. The Ordinance or Law Increased Amount of Coverage endorsement may be available to add to your policy to fill this gaping hole.

Water damage

Some water damage coverage can be added to your policy. If your home's drain lines are connected to a public sewer system, water backup from that system could cause water damage. Your basement could also suffer water damage if your sump pump fails. The Sewers, Drains, and Sump Pump Endorsement can be purchased if it is not already included in your policy. This is especially important if you have a finished basement.

Flooding is never covered on a homeowners policy since it can only be purchased through the US Government in the FEMA Flood Program. To find out if you are in a floodplain and if you should consider a flood policy, the www.fema.gov website shows maps of flood prone areas. Contact us if you'd like to learn more about a flood policy and to get a quote.

Home Sharing

Before "renting" your home or room(s) to guests via a vacation rental website such as Airbnb or HomeAway, check with FIFS to be sure you have the proper liability coverage. The online services may offer some insurance to hosts but the coverages may vary from one service to another. Also, your insurance carrier may or may not provide liability coverage if there is a claim while your space is being rented.

Our goal is to give you peace of mind knowing that the things that are important to you are protected at every stage in your life. We are here to assist you with your homeowners policy. Contact us today at info@fifs.com or 267.384.5300.

Be aware of the policy limitations

These are some common exclusions for the dwelling:

- Earth Movement
- Intentional Acts
- Mold
- Neglect
- Pollution
- Rodent & Vermin
- Wear 'n' Tear
- Water Damage

Common exclusions for personal property:

- Lost items
- Misplacing an item
- Breakage
- Damaged in an obscure way

You may schedule certain items to provide broader coverage for those that you feel warrant it. Also, consider if you have recently appraised them or reconsidered their value. The following are common items that are scheduled:

- Jewelry
- Musical instruments
- Photography equipment
- Antiques
- Collectibles
- Fine art
- Furs
- Golf clubs
- Guns

Important notice about recreational land motor vehicles

A homeowners policy does not cover bodily injury or property damage while away from your premises - when arising out of the ownership or use of a recreational land motor vehicle not designed for use on public roads (including snow-mobiles and ATVs). There is also no coverage for physical damage (including theft) of these vehicles while on or off your property. Please call our office immediately if you do not have coverage. It may be available under a separate policy.

Controlling your premium

- Installing several UL-listed smoke alarms in your home can save your life, and you will qualify for a premium discount.
 - Installing a central station alarm means even more savings.
- Increasing your deductible can offer additional premium savings up to 25%.
- Insure both your Auto and Homeowners policy with the same company and you may receive a discount on both policies.

Thank you for choosing FIFS. We appreciate you!

Keep up-to-date with FIFS by following our blog, www.fifs.com/blog

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Your future...**OUR PRIORITY**

A frequency of claims can be costly

Preventative maintenance can help avoid a surcharge. Some companies will surcharge a policy if you submit frequent claims. While you can't stop lightning from striking your house, many claims can be avoided with general maintenance. Things like replacing an old roof, servicing your furnace regularly, and replacing outdated plumbing or wiring can help reduce your chance of loss.

What to do if your property is damaged or stolen

If your property is **stolen** and/or your house is **burglarized**, always call the police first to report the loss. A police report will be required by the insurance company.

To report your loss, call our office during business hours or the insurance company claims hotline 24/7. All of the company claim information is available at our website and on our office after-hours answering service.

Taking pictures of damage to property can assist with the claims settlement.

When there is damage to appliances due to **lightning** and **power surges**, an estimate will be required with a statement indicating the cause of damage.

If your roof is damaged by **wind** or **fallen objects**, take precautions to prevent further damage. Place tarps on the roof as soon as possible and move personal property to prevent further damage.

It is best to have professionals help you clean up after **smoke** and **water damage**. They have equipment and techniques specifically suited for the damage.

We are happy to assist you with the claim process when you have any questions or concerns. This is why we're in business!

What to do if someone is injured while on your property or if you are sued

If someone was **injured**, contact FIFS or the insurance company claims hotline as soon as possible.

If you are being sued, report the **lawsuit** immediately to FIFS or the insurance company claims hotline. A copy of the lawsuit will need to be provided so that the insurance company can appropriately represent you in the case.

Personal umbrella coverage

A Personal Umbrella policy provides liability protection in addition to your homeowners, automobile, rental properties, and recreational vehicle policies. This "personal umbrella" provides another layer of liability coverage if you are sued personally. Contact FIFS for more information.

How it works...



We love referrals!

Refer a friend or relative to FIFS for homeowners or auto insurance and we will send you a gift card!