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BUILDING PRODUCTS MAGAZINE

SMART VENT
FOUNDATION FLOOD VENTS

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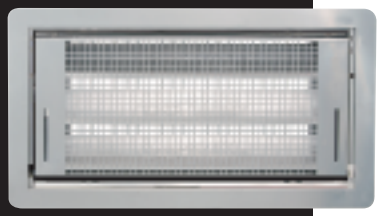

SMART VENT INC.- FOUNDATION FLOOD VENTS

When Hurricane Isabel hit the small Chesapeake Bay town of Bowley's Quarters, just east of Baltimore, Maryland, it became a testimony to the incredible ability of Smart Vent Inc.'s foundation flood vents to minimize damage to homes affected by flooding waters and the rapid cleanup that follows. While guidelines for new construction require a minimum standard for flood plain management, many builders, homeowners and local inspectors are unaware of the various products and techniques available to help protect properties from flooding waters. If properly outfitted, homes will be more able to withstand aberrant weather conditions and homeowners will be better prepared mentally and physically for the damages. Additionally, insurance companies will be more willing to settle the reduced-sized claims in a timelier manner.

Smart Vent Inc. has designed such a miraculous product. Its unique concept and design distinguish it from the other foundation flood vents on the market. The installation is simple and requires no special tools or interior access. It can be installed during construction or as a retrofit and requires only a relatively small 8"x 16" opening that protects up to 200sq.ft. of enclosed space. The stainless steel vent operates automatically, due to a patented float release mechanism that is triggered as the water rises. The vent allows for automatic entry and exit of flooding waters to relieve the buildup of hydrostatic pressure and thus protect the foundation from structural damage. While water that is easily cleaned up does enter the basement, the structural damage is minimized and the recovery is rapid by comparison.

As Hurricane Isabel struck Maryland's Eastern Shore, one Bowley's Quarter resident reported that the Bay water rose 8 ft. and 3ft. waves rolled up the creek. The water level rose rapidly to her waterfront home, where she and her husband had recently installed Smart Vents. As she watched the flood vents open and water pour in, she commented, "It was shocking to see floodwater enter through the vents. But that's what they were designed to do, reduce pressure on the outside walls and that's what they did. The water just kept coming in, peaking below the top of the wainscotings." As the hurricane passed, the vents automatically turned outward and allowed the water to drain without restriction. The homeowner said, "The minnows were swimming in the basement, but were sucked out through the flood vents as the water ran back into the Bay." The owner reported no structural damage and minimal cleanup. As the photographs indicate her neighbors who did not have Smart Vents, did not fair as well as the pictures indicate. This couple's thorough research and small investment paid tremendous dividends and they

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were able to avert major property damage and the emotional and financial toll it exacts on homeowners.

Smart Vent markets 3 foundation vent models that are all ICC certified and compliant with FEMA/NFIP and model building codes. The Smart Vent model provides flood protection and automatic ventilation and additionally is outfitted with temperature-controlled louvers to open when it's warm and close when it's cold. The Flood Vent model has the same flood protection abilities but is a one-piece door insulated which minimizes temperature loss and can be installed where no ventilation is required. The third option is the overhead door model, which mounts easily into a garage door. It is useful for retrofit or when there is limited space available. All three are outstanding choices to protect your home, save on insurance, and provides peace of mind.

Smart Vent offers some additional advice to homeowners to reduce the risk of property damage due to floodwaters and hurricane-force winds:

1. Use flood resistant materials below the base flood elevation. Materials such as non-absorbent foam, plastic trim and wainscoting and screws, which allow the owners easy access to remove and clean damaged areas if necessary.
2. Install hurricane shutters on all of the windows.
3. Please obey your community's evacuation recommendation.
4. Elevate your structure, if possible.

While these precautions can be expensive, utilizing these easy and cost efficient measures will assuredly save the property owner much heartache and headache in withstanding future hurricane like conditions.

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