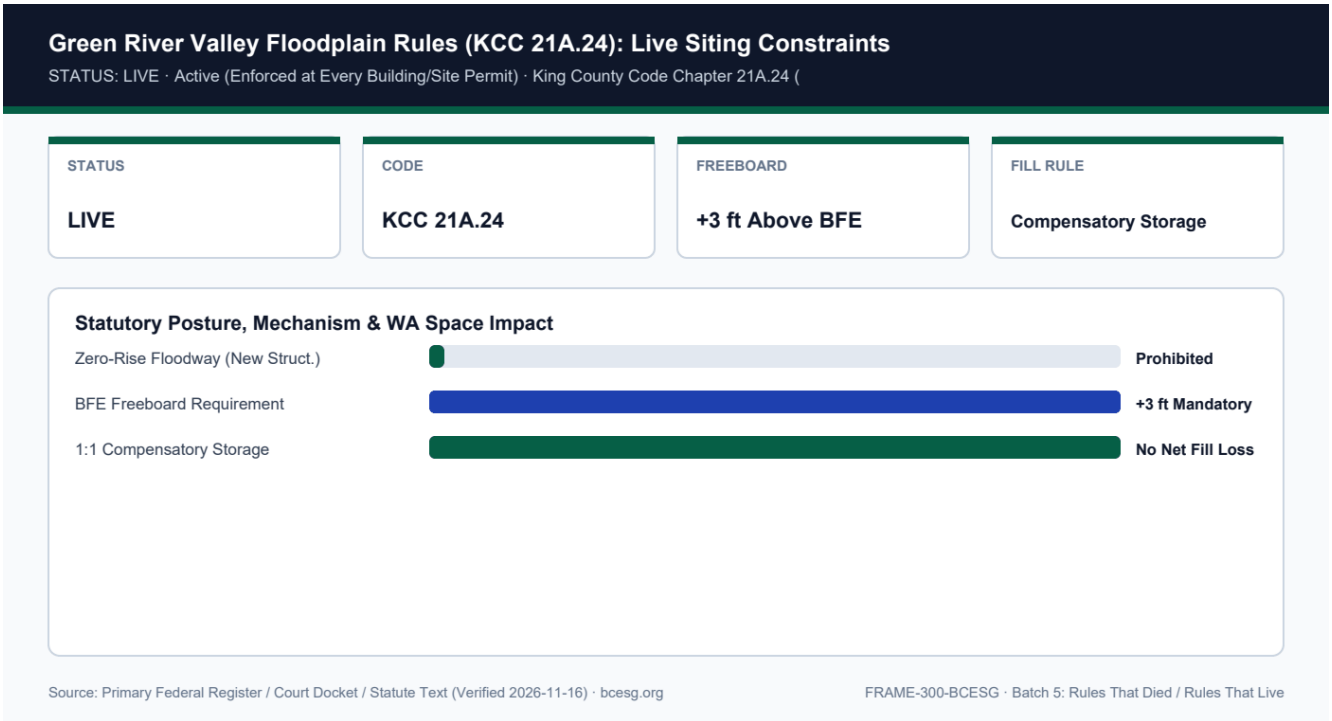
King County Floodplain & Green River Levee Rules (KCC 21A.24): LIVE — Zero-Rise & 3-Ft Freeboard

Published: November 16, 2026 · Canonical URL: https://bcesg.org/wa-space-rule-king-county-floodplain-levee-live/

Rule: King County Critical Areas Flood Hazard & Green River Levee Rules (KCC Chapter 21A.24) | **Status:** LIVE | **Instrument:** King County Code Chapter 21A.24 (21A.24.230–.270) & Municipal Flood Ordinances | **Date:** Active (Enforced at Every Building/Site Permit)

Verdict & Proof: King County Code Chapter 21A.24 floodplain and Green River levee-driven land-use rules are LIVE. Valley facilities in Kent and Tukwila face Zero-Rise Floodway prohibitions, Channel Migration Zone setbacks, 3-foot Base Flood Elevation (BFE) freeboard, and 1:1 compensatory flood storage.



Flood Hazard Rule	Standard	Impact on Valley Space Facilities
Zero-Rise Floodway	No new structures; 0.0 ft rise	Blocks expansion into active floodway
Lowest Floor Elevation	BFE + 3 feet minimum	Drives slab/dock elevation & floodproofing
Compensatory Storage	1:1 volume replacement	Requires detention/excavation for yard fill
Hazardous Materials	Restricted in flood hazard areas	Affects propellant, solvent & battery storage

Who Owes What by When: Kent & Tukwila Green River Corridor

The Green River corridor running through Kent and Tukwila hosts major Washington space facilities (including Blue Origin, Stoke Space, Cowboy Space, BlackSky, and Starfish Space). Under KCC 21A.24.230–.270 and coordinated Kent/Tukwila municipal critical-area codes, new structures are barred in FEMA/Zero-Rise Floodways, and Channel Migration Zones (CMZs) restrict bankside expansion.

Permitted construction or substantial improvement in the Flood Fringe requires elevating the lowest floor at least 3 feet above the 100-year Base Flood Elevation (BFE), providing 1:1 compensatory storage for any fill, protecting King County Flood Control District levee access/setbacks, and restricting hazardous material storage.

Levee-Protected Parcels Are Not Exempt

Even parcels behind Green River levees (Disconnected Migration Areas) frequently remain mapped in FEMA Special Flood Hazard Areas or face levee-setback and overtopping standards.

Verified Primary Sources & Internal Bridges

- FEMA Flood Map Service Center: https://www.fema.gov/flood-maps
- King County Code Title 21A (KCC 21A.24): https://aqua.kingcounty.gov/council/clerk/code/24_Title_21A.htm