

more than 10 per year since 2010. Many scientists believe that global climate change is contributing to this rise—and that we can expect it to continue.

Does it make sense to keep building back up what nature continues to knock down?

## Building Better

There may be a few places where not rebuilding is the smartest and safest thing to do. But in most areas, we just need to be willing to make some changes, whether it's moving oceanfront neighborhoods back from the beach or building carefully landscaped, fire-resistant zones around homes in wildfire country.

New Orleans has set an excellent example of smart rebuilding. In 2005, Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast, killing at least 1,833 people. Eighty percent of New Orleans was flooded.

Today, the city has been largely rebuilt—and it is stronger than ever. It has installed a major new flood barrier, 350 miles of levees and floodwalls, and the world's largest **drainage-pump station**. Many new buildings are designed to be flood-proof, and many new homes are elevated, to keep them safe from floodwaters. Similar steps are being taken in New York and New Jersey, the areas hit worst by Hurricane Sandy last October. Tougher building codes are being enforced and houses are being raised.

Brad Pitt started a foundation to build super flood-proof homes like this one in New Orleans.



We can also draw inspiration from other parts of the world. In Japan, for example, amazing innovations protect high-rise buildings from earthquakes. Enormous rubber **shock absorbers** and sliding walls help these buildings withstand quakes, as they did in 2011, when the fourth most-powerful earthquake on record hit Japan. Can California—the most earthquake-prone part of the United States—take a cue?

Sometimes the best defense against extreme weather is nature itself. Waterfront homes and businesses may need to be moved inland and natural defenses

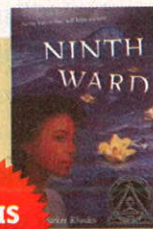
against flooding—such as **wetlands**, coral reefs, sand dunes, and flood plains—restored. These **ecosystems** naturally slow and reduce storm surge—the wall of seawater that rushes onto land during a big storm.

As we struggle with the long-term **implications** of climate change, it's time to take a close look at where and how we rebuild—and to summon the courage to consider a future different from the past. ●



## WRITING CONTEST

There is a Tibetan saying that "tragedy should be utilized as a strength." In two paragraphs, explain what you think this saying means and how it applies to natural disasters. Use details from both "Surviving Hurricane Sandy" and "After the Disaster." Send your response to **STORM CONTEST**. Five winners will each get *Ninth Ward* by Jewell Parker Rhodes. See page 2 for details.



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