



# THE IAFSM CURRENT

Illinois Association for  
Floodplain and Stormwater Management

Summer 2012 Newsletter

## What Our Members Think about Floodplain Management...

~Bryan Martindale, P.E., CFM, Hoelscher Engineering

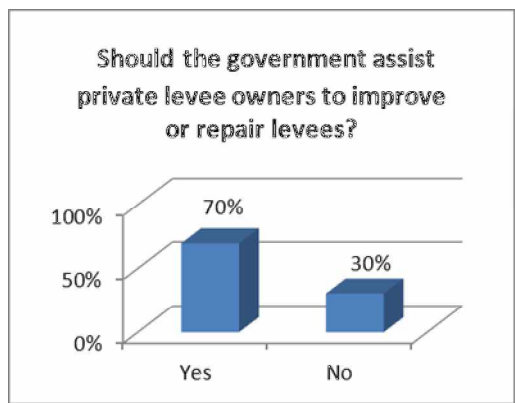
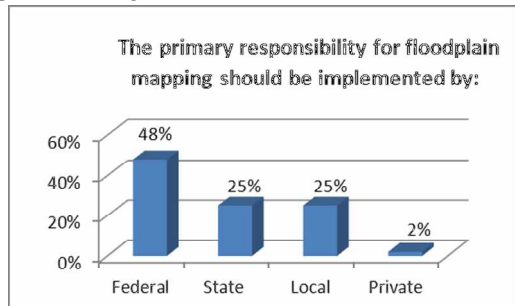
How many times you been involved in informal discussions regarding floodplain management during the IAFSM conferences? Many of these discussions are passionate and intense (although that just could be the liquid refreshment speaking during the social hour!) On a serious note, the discussions are interesting and informative and provide a varied view point for floodplain management issues. For all the disagreements on how best to handle specific floodplain management issues, there is a significant amount of common ground for all us in the floodplain management community. It was with this premise that I developed the questionnaire presented to the members at the 2012 annual conference. A shout of thanks goes to Paul Osman of the IDNR-OWR who acted as a sounding board regarding the survey questions.

The survey consisted of 32 questions covering floodplain mapping, regulations, levees, insurance, politics, and asked respondents to provide one idea that could vastly improve floodplain management.

A total of 100 survey questionnaires were distributed at the IAFSM conference and 52 completed questionnaires were returned. A few of the more interesting results are presented in the following discussion. A complete tabulation of the results can be viewed on the IAFSM website at <http://www.illinoisfloods.org/news.html>.

**Floodplain Mapping** – The responses show almost a 50/50 split between those individuals that prefer the federal government be responsible for mapping, and those who prefer more local entities such as the state or local governing bodies. Only 2% of the respondents indicated a willingness to allow the private sector to take on this responsibility.

**Levees** – This was interesting. An overwhelming number of respondents believe that government assistance is acceptable to improve private levees. Several respondents that answered “no” to this question conditioned the “no” vote with the position that if the private levee protected the public at large, then it would be acceptable to provide public monies to private levee owners for improvements or repairs to the levee



### Inside This Issue

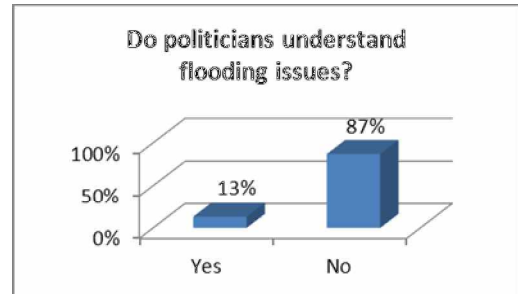
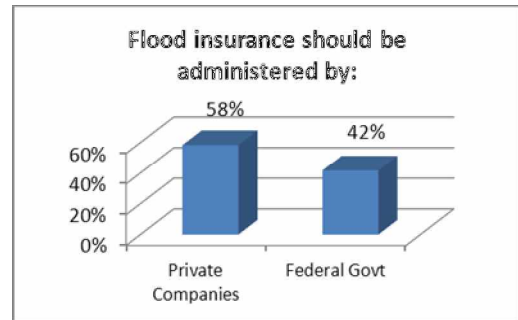
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A separate levee question indicated that 98% of respondents believe the federal government should maintain a national levee inventory.

**Floodplain Regulation** – A unanimous response to any survey question is not the norm. However, the position of our respondents to the mitigation question was quite clear: 100% of respondents indicated that mitigation (elevation or demolition) should be required on structures that flood repeatedly. This result indicates no “soft spot” for structures that continue to receive flood damage.

**Insurance** – Since the personnel attending the IAFSM conference are likely some of the most informed individuals regarding the insurance aspects of floodplain management, these results appear to indicate that a certain amount of confidence has been lost with respect to the National Flood Insurance Program.

**Political** – This is one of my favorite questions; although it is “loaded”. While politicians are an easy target for most technical issues, it is apparent that almost everyone that responded to this question agrees that there is a general lack of floodplain management knowledge possessed by politicians. Some of the individual comments for those that answered “No” to this question included: “The issues are not sexy enough” and “We need to dummy it down for them”. One of the interesting comments from a respondent voting “YES” included this – “only for their own agenda”.




The last question on the survey was crafted to provide an opportunity for respondents to “speak from the heart” and provide one suggestion that would vastly improve floodplain management in their community. A few of the more colorful responses follow:

- Keep politicians out of floodplain management policy/development decisions
- No floodplain construction – period!
- Include floodplain status on title of property
- Post signs in floodplain so flooding risk is obvious public knowledge
- More Paul Osmands! (No, this wasn't Paul's survey!)

While the above suggestions for improvements are interesting, they represent singular responses. The most common suggestion that was submitted indicated a need for more Education and Public Outreach regarding flood risk! With this response, it is clear that each of us in the floodplain management community should endeavor to inform, express, and communicate why floodplain management is so crucial to our state and communities.


On a closing note, for any of you still holding those unreturned surveys, it's not too late to submit them and let us know what you think!



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## New DuPage County Stormwater and Floodplain Ordinance

~Clayton Heffter, CFM, DuPage County, and Erik Gil, P.E., CFM, Christopher B. Burke Engineering, Ltd.

The DuPage County Board approved a new stormwater ordinance on April 24, 2012, and it became effective the next day. According to Stormwater Committee Chairman Jim Zay, “The updated stormwater ordinance will allow DuPage County to remain competitive in maintaining and attracting business while preserving the high standard of flood control and environmental protection for residents.”

Under the updated stormwater ordinance:

- There are alternate methods to review and approve applications for permits by reducing submittal requirements under special circumstances through General Certifications and Letters of Permission.
- Thresholds for providing stormwater runoff facilities is changed from a zoning based system to a system that recognizes the change in impervious areas on a site over time.
- Volume control BMPs are now required on development sites to promote runoff reduction, groundwater recharge, water quality.
- Limitations on flood plain modeling regulations to reduce submittal requirements have been included.
- Flood plain regulations were adjusted to allow for additional types of development within the flood plain (sheds, detached garages, etc.).
- Riparian mitigation requirements were consolidated with the requirements of wetland buffers.
- Thresholds for post construction best management practices (PCBMP) were amended to correlate directly with changes in impervious area on the development site.
- Additional special cases of development were recognized which may be eligible for reduced submittal requirements.

Following DuPage County’s approval of the new ordinance, the DuPage County municipalities will also adopt the minimum requirements of the stormwater ordinance during the spring and early summer months. All of the communities retain the right to be more restrictive in any area where it would benefit the community. All DuPage County municipalities, except for Aurora and St. Charles, fall under the county’s stormwater ordinance. Residents and developers can learn more about the new ordinance and associated general certifications, which were also recently updated, at:

[www.dupageco.org/EDP/Stormwater\\_Management/Regulatory\\_Services/1420](http://www.dupageco.org/EDP/Stormwater_Management/Regulatory_Services/1420).



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## FloodSmart Offers Online Tools and Resources to Communicate Flood Risk

~Bruce Bender, FloodSmart

Floodplain managers in Illinois are on the front lines of defense against the devastating consequences of floods. Providing information about the risk of flooding to residents and business owners is an important part of the job.

As floodplain managers can attest, many citizens are not convinced that their property could be flooded. They don't understand why they are at risk or what the financial implications of a flood can be. Helping property owners understand their flood risk and getting them to take action to prepare, mitigate, and purchase flood insurance remains an ongoing challenge for floodplain managers.

FloodSmart, the marketing arm of the National Flood Insurance Program, has developed a series of Web-based tools and resources to answer that challenge. Floodplain managers can use them to illustrate the risk of flooding and the steps that citizens need to take to reduce their risk.

The tools bring the flood story to life for both residents and business owners. They're shareable, which means you can link to them in communications, or include them on your own community's website. To find them, click on [Community Resources](#) on the [FloodSmart.gov](#) homepage or go straight to <http://floodsmart.gov/partners> and click on [Tools and Resources](#) in the "Get Started" section. Here's some of what's available:

- [Cost of Flooding](#) – Interactive tool that illustrates the financial consequences of a flood based on how deep the water may be in a house.



- [Flood Risk Scenarios](#) – Illustrates common causes of flooding through animated scenarios.
- [Levee Simulator](#) – Animated tool that explains how levees work and how they can fail.
- [Widgets](#) – Short animations that illustrate the risks of flooding and include links to more information.



- **Testimonials** – Online videos from people who have experienced flooding and give compelling, first-hand accounts of the consequences of flooding and the importance of flood insurance.
- **Toolkits** – A downloadable library of Spanish language material, general flood insurance information and Flood Map Update outreach guidance. The Flood Map Update toolkit includes templated outreach material for community officials to communicate the changing flood risks to different stakeholders, the public, the media and internally throughout the mapping timeline.

IAFSM members are an important resource for helping local citizens better understand the risk of flooding and the role of flood insurance. These FloodSmart tools and resources can help do just that. Don't wait— start using them today. For more ideas about using them and downloading them onto your website, contact FloodSmart at [info@femafloodsmart.com](mailto:info@femafloodsmart.com).

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## Great Chicago Flood's 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

~reprinted from *Structure Magazine*, August, 2007;  
Jon Wren, Ph.D., P.E.

In the early morning of April 13, 1992, dozens of downtown Chicago buildings started to mysteriously flood. Soon flooding knocked out utility services to more than 100 buildings. And the worst was yet to come. Flood water seeped into subway tunnels, shutting down the entire subway system. A major expressway inexplicably flooded, causing shutdown of several lanes of traffic. Hundreds of thousands of workers were sent home. Paralysis quickly gripped one of the nation's major economic centers. It took six days to plug the source of floodwater, and over a month and \$5 million to dewater building basements. The cost of the flood would ultimately total approximately \$1 billion. For the full article, visit: <http://www.structuremag.org/article.aspx?articleID=307#ArticlePDF>



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## Are you a Senior Water Resource Engineer?

ASCE recently developed a post-licensure certification process for senior water resource engineers. An academy was created, the certification has been developed and they have been certifying engineers as Diplomate, Water Resource Engineers (D.WRE) for the past 6+ years. The requirements are as follows:

- A Masters Degree in a field related to the water resource engineer's practice or 30 graduate hours.
- 10 years professional engineering experience in water resource engineering.
- Licensed as a PE.

The application process requires detailed information about the engineer's education, career and licensure. Letters of reference are also required. P. Kay Whitlock, Christopher B. Burke Engineering, Ltd., would be pleased to coach Illinois Section engineers through the process and would author letters of reference, if requested. An oral interview can be required where the applicant defends their experience much like a masters defense; sometimes the application will speak for itself and the interview will be waived.

More information and application materials can be found on the web-site [www.aawre.org](http://www.aawre.org). Engineers with the above requirements but with 25 years of experience can be nominated through an eminence process. IAFSM member who meet the eminent requirement should contact Kay directly for further information: [kwhitlock@cbbel.com](mailto:kwhitlock@cbbel.com) or 847-823-0500. Applications are accepted year round and are processed semi-annually for regular applicants.

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## **From the Chair**

- Michael D. Cothard, P.E., CFM, Christopher B. Burke Engineering, Ltd.

This year's Association of State Floodplain Managers (ASFPM) 2012 national conference was held in San Antonio, Texas. The conference was once again well organized and drew a record attendance of over 1,300 attendees. The IAFSM was well represented and as usual, our excellence and experience as a Chapter was noted and appreciated. The conference is always a great experience and offered a chance to hear from federal agencies and learn about work going on elsewhere in the nation. It was also rewarding to meet some of our counterparts in neighboring state chapters. We now have membership with 33 ASFPM chapters and Pittsburg appears ready to become the 34<sup>th</sup> chapter. The national membership remains greater than 14,000 members.

I want to thank the outgoing ASFPM Chapter Director for District 2 (which includes the Illinois Chapter), Gerald Robinson, P.E., CFM, for 14 years of service to both the IAFSM and ASFPM. The ASFPM Chapter Director can be elected to three, two year terms for a total of six years. Jerry represented Illinois for the maximum six years, in addition to his eight years as IAFSM Treasurer, Vice-Chair, Chair and past Chair.

Chapter Directors are designated individuals representing state or multi-state chapters and associations. Chapter Directors are the conduit between the ASFPM and the chapters and associations within their geographical area.

District 2 encompasses ASFPM Regions 3 and 5 including: Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia and Wisconsin, as well as the District of Columbia. Each of those states have Chapters except Delaware, Pennsylvania, West Virginia and the District of Columbia.

Many thanks to Jerry, for your years of dedicated service to floodplain management at the State and Federal level!

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## **Thanks Again to our Conference Sponsors!**

Thanks again to those who helped support the 2012 annual conference. Due to significant increases in hotel and conference center costs, we would have finished "in the red" without the support of these organizations.

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## CEC/Training Opportunities

Some of you may have a CFM certification that is up for renewal on July 31. Don't forget to get your CECs!

### IAFSM Sponsored Training

**July 25 - Floodplain Management Workshop, Collinsville, IL**, sponsored by IAFSM. This Workshop is designed for local officials and is also a refresher course for Certified Floodplain Managers and will include a discussion of floodplain maps, flood insurance studies, map changes, IDNR-OWR permitting, Floodplain Building permitting and Elevation Certifications, and Insurance and Mitigation. The CFM exam will be offered the following day in the Metro East area. Cost is \$20 and 6 CECs and PDHs will be provided. Register at: <https://www.123signup.com/register?id=scmdv>

### Other training opportunities include:

July 5- Sustainable Stormwater hydrology, Webinar, See ASCE website

July 11-13 HEC-RAS class, Oakbrook, See ASCE website

July 11 – Workshop for Illinois Code Compliance Officials, Elgin

July 12- Elevation Certificates, Webinar, FREE, See ASFPM website

July 25- Floodplain Management Workshop, Collinsville,\$20, See attachment

August 8- NonPoint Source Pollution and Erosion Comparison tool- webinar- See ASFPM website

August 9- Elevation Certificates, Webinar, FREE, See ASFPM website

August 16- Engineering through Ethical Challenges, Webinar, See ASCE website.

ASFPM website: <http://floods.org/n-calendar/calendar.asp>

ASCE website: <http://www.asce.org/ewri/Calendar.aspx>

The Emergency Management Institute recently updated the 2012 course schedule, including vacancies in August for the HAZUS-MH training. The 2013 schedule is also available.

<http://training.fema.gov/EMI/#News>



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## **Important Stuff We Tell You in Every Newsletter...**

### **Save the Date! 2013 Conference**

The 2013 Annual Conference will be held March 6 – 7 at the Bloomington-Normal Marriott.

### **Wanted: Newsletter Ideas and Articles**

IAFSM members, this is YOUR newsletter! Email Jennifer Maercklein, editor, at [jmaercklein@v3co.com](mailto:jmaercklein@v3co.com) if there are topics that you'd like us to cover. You don't need to write the article - we just want your ideas! If you're gifted with a pen and would like to provide content, we welcome your written contributions as well.

### **Get Involved with IAFSM!**

IAFSM Committee Chairs welcome your help and involvement. See the list of chairs on the last page of this newsletter, or visit the committee webpage to learn more about volunteer opportunities. <http://www.illinoisfloods.org/committees.html>

### **Borrow our Water Table**

IAFSM has two Watershed Tabletop Models available for all members to check out (free of charge) and bring to Public Works Open Houses, Scout meetings, 4-H meetings, school classrooms, etc. This offers a great opportunity to educate about the dangers and impact of unplanned development and human activity in the floodplain. IAFSM keeps one in Springfield and the other in northeast Illinois. Contact Sarah at [iafsm@sbcglobal.net](mailto:iafsm@sbcglobal.net) to make arrangements.

### **Next Board Meeting**

The next IAFSM Board Meeting is scheduled for 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, July 11, 2012 at V3 Companies, 7325 Janes Avenue, Woodridge. All members are welcome and encouraged to attend. See you there!

### **Jobmart**

Visit our Jobmart at <http://www.illinoisfloods.org/jobmart.html> Jobmart is a free service to members of IAFSM. If you would like to post a position, send complete information to [IAFSM@sbcglobal.net](mailto:IAFSM@sbcglobal.net).

### **2012 CFM Exam Schedule**

To view 2012 exam dates and register, visit [www.illinoisfloods.org/certification.html](http://www.illinoisfloods.org/certification.html).



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Floodplain and Stormwater Management

Summer 2012 Newsletter

The IAFSM Newsletter is published quarterly for members of the Illinois Association for Floodplain and Stormwater Management. Information and opinions contained herein do not necessarily reflect the views of all members. Items for publication and other editorial matters should be directed to the editor at [jmaercklein@v3co.com](mailto:jmaercklein@v3co.com). To advertise in this newsletter (\$100-\$200 per year depending on ad size) contact the association at [IAFSM@sbcglobal.net](mailto:IAFSM@sbcglobal.net).

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