

IAFSM NEWSLETTER

Illinois Association for
Floodplain and Stormwater Management

Winter 2009

2008 Illinois Hazard Year End Review

-Jared Owen, IEMA

This year has been much more active in terms of severe weather compared to last year. In 2008, 51 counties received a Natural Presidential Disaster Declaration. When compared to other states, Illinois sits 10th overall in total number of Presidentially Declared Disasters with 46 (as of mid-December). Texas is atop the list at 83, while California is 2nd with 74. Data compiled by the Office of the State Climatologist, Illinois State Water Survey, USGS, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, FEMA, and the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) summarize IEMA's year end review.

2008 marked the wettest January-July on record for Illinois with 32.8 inches, 9.4 inches above normal. State-wide July precipitation was 6.3 inches, 2.5 inches above normal. Every month from December 2007 to July 2008 had above-normal precipitation.

Based on preliminary numbers, this was the 16th driest August on record for Illinois with 2.3 inches, 1.4 inches below normal. This ended the 8-month streak of above-normal precipitation in Illinois. The January-August period produced 35.1 inches, which is 8 inches above normal and the 4th wettest January-August on record. The statewide temperature for August was 71.9 degrees, 1.7 degrees below normal.

Based on preliminary data, the state-wide average precipitation for September was 7.9 inches, making this the third wettest September on record (going back to 1895) for Illinois. Chicago (at O'Hare airport) reported 6.64 inches on September 13, setting a new record for the most rain in one calendar day in Chicago's history. The old record was 6.49 inches on August 14, 1987. Chicago climate records date back to 1871.



September 13, 2008 was the wettest day in Chicago's history. This photo shows flooding in nearby Bensenville. Photo by Carol Perry, WGN Weather Blog.

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Aside from the 2008 precipitation levels in Illinois, other natural hazard records indicate Illinois had 88 tornado reports as of mid-December, compared to only 23 for the entire year of 2007. In addition there have been 408 hail and 663 wind damage reports as of mid-December.

2008 also brought Illinois an earthquake. The 2008 Illinois earthquake was one of the largest earthquakes ever recorded in the state of Illinois, measuring a magnitude of 5.2. It occurred at 4:37:00am CDT on April 18 within the Wabash Valley Seismic Zone at a depth of 11.6 km. It was centered near West Salem, Illinois and Mount Carmel, Illinois, specifically 38.450°N, 87.890°W, and felt up to 450 miles away. Tremors were felt as far west as Nebraska and Kansas City, as far south as Atlanta, as far east as Kitchener, Ontario and West Virginia, and as far north as the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. The earthquake was felt so far away, compared to earthquakes in other regions, because the old, rigid bedrock beneath much of the Midwest allows the tremor to propagate further. From 1974 – 2003 Illinois has recorded 17 earthquakes.

[Editor's note: Chicago's 2008 precipitation exceeded 50 inches for the first time, surpassing 1983's 49.35-inch annual total. Chicago recorded 50.83 inches of rainfall (preliminary data) through December 27, 2008.]

References:

- ISWS Press release July 2nd, 2008; *Jim Angel Author*
- USGS 2008 Data for Illinois: <http://earthquake.usgs.gov/eqcenter/eqinthenews/2008/us2008qza6/>
- Federal Emergency Management Agency Disaster Declaration Summary <http://www.fema.gov/news/disasters.fema>
- ISWS Press release Sept. 2nd, 2008; *Jim Angel Author*
- State of Illinois 2007 Hazard Mitigation Plan, Hazard Identification and Risk Analysis section
- National Climatic Data Center; *Storm Events in Illinois* <http://www4.ncdc.noaa.gov/cgi-win/wwcgi.dll?wwevent~storms>



Flooding on September 13, 2008 in Streamwood. Photo by Dave and Roxie, WGN Weather Blog.

Governors and Obama Should Make Water Infrastructure a Top Economic Stimulus Priority: *Green Solutions for Clean Water and Flood Protection Save Money, Create Jobs, Improve Public Safety*

-Amy Kober, American Rivers, published Tuesday December 2, 2008

Philadelphia, PA -- American Rivers today [December 2, 2008] called on the National Governors Association and President-elect Obama to make green solutions for the nation's water treatment systems, sewers and levees a top economic stimulus priority that will save money, create jobs, and improve public safety. Governors from 40 states are meeting with the President-elect today to discuss economic stimulus measures including infrastructure investments.

"If the economic stimulus plan doesn't include significant investments in green solutions for our water infrastructure needs, a once-in-a-century opportunity will be lost," said Betsy Otto, vice president for strategic partnerships at American Rivers.

Our country is fast approaching a crisis point when it comes to clean water. The nation's sewer systems, pipes, and levees are outdated and crumbling, and global warming threatens communities with more floods, droughts and waterborne diseases. The American Society of Civil Engineers recently graded the nation's dams a D, and wastewater and drinking water systems a D-, the lowest grades of any infrastructure category.



American Rivers applauded the National Governors Association and its chairman, Pennsylvania Governor Edward Rendell, for including investments in drinking water systems, flood control, and water reclamation in its economic stimulus recommendations. But while the NGA proposed \$15.2 billion in water infrastructure investments, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency estimates that fixing the nation's water infrastructure will cost at least \$277 billion, and not fixing it will cost even more.

American Rivers urged the governors and the President-elect to invest in green infrastructure solutions to cost effectively stretch investments in water. Green infrastructure can help supply clean water, reduce polluted runoff, stop sewer overflows, and minimize flooding and thus enhance community safety.

Green infrastructure incorporates both the natural environment and engineered systems and provides a wide array of benefits. It means planting trees and restoring wetlands, rather than building a costly new water treatment plant. It means choosing water efficiency instead of building a new water supply dam. It means restoring floodplains instead of building taller levees.

ASCE's infrastructure report card. "We need to invest more in water infrastructure, but we need to invest more wisely, too," said Otto. "Making significant, strategic green investments in our water infrastructure will save money, create good jobs, and give our country a head start on an important new sector of the economy."

Green infrastructure creates jobs in many sectors that can't be outsourced, including plumbing, landscaping, engineering, building, and design. Green solutions also support supply chains and the jobs connected with manufacturing of materials from rain barrels to permeable pavement.

Many forward-looking cities are already embracing green infrastructure, including New York, Chicago, Portland, Seattle, San Francisco, Minneapolis-St. Paul, Milwaukee, Kansas City, Toledo, Cincinnati, and Philadelphia, as well as many others.

The following core principles should guide water infrastructure funding so that proven, cost-effective green solutions are chosen instead of old, outdated, costly approaches:

Nature works best: Rivers, streams, wetlands, floodplains, and forests provide a suite of critical services like clean water and flood protection, and should be viewed as essential and effective components of our water infrastructure. The reason New York City has great quality tap water is because the city invested in water protection by purchasing land around its Catskills reservoirs rather than by building expensive treatment plants. That strategy ensured that polluted run-off from roads and lawns doesn't enter the water supply and saved the city over \$6 billion in capital and maintenance costs.

Don't waste money: Spending money wisely means investing in multi-purpose solutions that lower costs and provide more benefits. Recently, the City of Indianapolis announced that by using wetlands, planting trees, and disconnecting downspouts to limit stormwater flows into its combined sewer system, the city will be able to install much smaller sewer pipes, saving over \$300 million.

Enhance community safety and security: Traditional infrastructure isn't designed to handle the increased floods and droughts that come with global warming, so we need a modern approach to protect public health, safety, and quality of life. Green solutions give communities the flexibility and security they need. Napa, CA solved flooding problems by choosing to restore the Napa River's natural channel and wetlands, rather than lining the river with concrete. The effort has protected 2,700 homes and prevented \$26 million in flood damage each year.

Rand Park Flood Control and Multi-Use Trail Project Complete, Wins ACEC Award

-Loren Wobig, IDNR-OWR

A ribbon cutting ceremony for the 16 million dollar Rand Park Floodwall and Multi-Use Trail Project in Des Plaines, Illinois was conducted by local officials on Nov. 20, 2008. The Rand Park Flood Control and Multi-Use Trail Project eliminates flooding caused by Des Plaines River flood stages back flowing into an area along Farmer's Creek, and from Des Plaines River flood flows which overtop Dempster Avenue and spill into a residential and commercial area south of Dempster Avenue in Des Plaines. At the ceremony Mayor Tony Aredia said "It took seven years to get this done, but the flooding we had back in September proved that this levee works".

The project is intended to provide 100-year frequency flood protection to 181 structures in Des Plaines, Park Ridge and unincorporated Cook County and has already proved its worth several times in the last 2 years. This floodwall, levee and Farmer's Creek gated pump station produces \$1,314,700 in average annual flood damage reduction benefits.

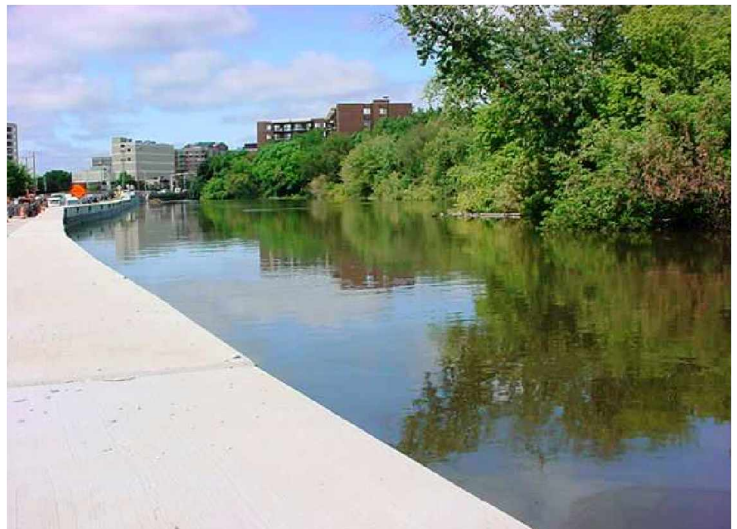
In addition to the flood control benefits of this project it also provides a crucial link to 29 miles of the Des Plaines River Trail. The project includes a 12 foot wide, paved, multi-use trail system along the floodwall and levee alignment to provide closure to a critical gap in the Grand Illinois Trail system, which spans 500 miles through northern Illinois and is the states's longest continuous trail.

This project was constructed in 3 phases. Work on the initial phase of this project included a culvert extension that was completed in December 1999. The second phase included construction of the gated pump station on Farmer's Creek and the placement of clay blanket along the riverward slope of the Union Pacific Railroad and was completed in 2004. The nearly completed third phase includes construction of all remaining floodwall, levee, gate and trail components of the project.

The Illinois Section of the American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC) will present CTE and IDNR/OWR with a Merit Award for the design and construction of this flood control project on February 13th 2009 at the Drake Hotel in Chicago.



Construction of Rand Park floodwall along the Des Plaines River in Des Plaines, Illinois.



The floodwall provided protection to Des Plaines residents and businesses during the September 2008 flood event.



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Levees and the Truth

The text below was included in a letter sent from IAFSM to our congressional representatives in Washington on December 8, 2008:

The Illinois Association for Floodplain and Stormwater Management (IAFSM) is the voice for sound floodplain management within the State of Illinois. Our membership of over 600 floodplain management professionals encourage effective approaches to protecting the public and managing the state's floodplain resources.

IAFSM is very concerned about recent political efforts to circumvent public flood risk awareness in areas of the state currently protected by certified levees. A politically motivated delay in true risk identification sets a very dangerous precedent.

The purpose of levee accreditation is to serve the public. If levees are not providing protection, citizens should be properly informed. People cannot protect their lives and their property if they are not informed of the risk. Who is served by hiding the fact that levees do not meet minimum protection requirements?

When the Henderson levees failed in 2008 and the community of Gulfport was devastated by flooding, only 28 residents had flood insurance policies. Residents complained that the Federal Emergency Management Agency did not inform them of the risk. Clearly, people should be informed. It is unethical, irresponsible, and potentially libelous to withhold documented and accurate risk information from the public.

We ask that you do NOT support any attempt to withhold documented levee deficiencies. We ask that you do NOT support any delays in the true risk identification (mapping) effort. We also ask that you allow the experienced floodplain and levee experts in the field to uphold their professionalism and ethical responsibilities.


*Sincerely,
IAFSM*

Cool Visual of Keithsburg Flooding


In June of 2008, Keithsburg, IL, located on the Mississippi River, received substantial flooding due to a levee breach after an intense period of rainfall in the region. An annotated computer graphic visualization using aerial photos show a portion of Keithsburg at three different time periods: 1990, 2005 and June of 2008 during the most recent flooding.

The computer graphic visualization provides an easy-to-understand visual to illustrate a successful example of the FEMA non-structural post disaster mitigation program (HMGP).

To view the visualization, go to:
http://www.floods.org/TheOrganization/Links/Keithsburg_Viz.html

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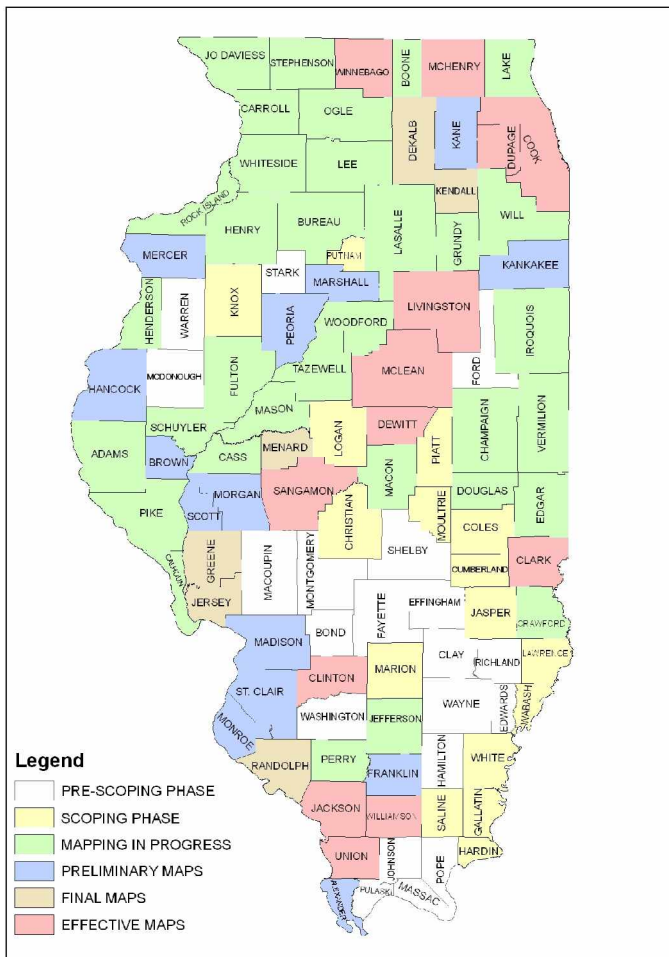


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FEMA is Going Digital Beginning October 1, 2009

Beginning on October 1, 2009, FEMA will be filling orders for flood hazard maps and reports with digital files only. A single paper copy will be provided to communities when their maps are updated. All further orders will be filled with digital files. After October 1, 2009, FEMA's Map Service Center (MSC) will not produce or distribute paper Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs), Flood Hazard Boundary Maps (FHBMs), or Flood Insurance Study (FIS) reports. A fact sheet provides information to ease the transition from paper to digital maps and reports which will be useful both to users of paper maps and users of digital maps. The fact sheet is available at <http://www.fema.gov/library/viewRecord.do?id=3474>



Map Modernization Project Update

-Matt Williams, Illinois State Water Survey

The state graphic depicts the progression of the Illinois State Water Survey's Map Modernization Project for each county. From start to finish, the process of modernizing flood maps for each county takes approximately 24 months.

Scoping Meetings are one of the first steps in the process, and have been scheduled for Putnam, Knox, Logan, Piatt, Christian, Moultrie, Coles, Cumberland, Jasper, Lawrence, Marion, Wabash, White, Saline, Gallatin, and Hardin in the next several months.

For more information or to check the status of your County, visit www.illinoisfloodmaps.org.

Pre-Scoping: County awaiting scoping
Scoping: Scoping meeting complete
In Progress: Maps being recreated
Preliminary: Maps finished, open for public comment
Final: Map awaiting County adoption
Effective: Map effective and regulatory

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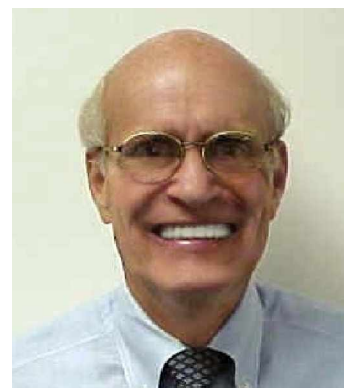
From the Chair

- E. Stuart Richter, CFM, Chair, IAFSM

Here we are, rushing toward IAFSM's annual conference in Champaign, IL. Also, the end of my second term as Chair. It hardly seems possible that two years have gone by already, but time flies when you are doing something that is both meaningful and enjoyable. Now, I am just waiting for Winter to get here. Fall has been so nice so far with about 10 inches of snow, 1/4 inch of ice and more of each on the way. We are getting flood warnings on the Rock River already. Even my windshield washer fluid froze the other day. How bad can Winter be?

So what is new around IAFSM? At our September meeting, the Board adopted one more policy, this dealing with the sponsorships of our training opportunities. In the past, IAFSM acted as the sole sponsor unless we were combining forces with another public organization. There has been interest by others in the private sector for sponsoring IAFSM events. In order to be fair to all concerned, the policy was adopted to cover those private sector sponsors. This does not mean that IAFSM will no longer be the sole sponsor of most events. It only provides a means to allow for the other sponsors.

In November, we held our annual "conference crunching" board meeting. Just before the meeting started, I learned that our CRS Chair, John Lentz, was retiring from IDNR that coming Friday and leaving the IAFSM Board. It was a bit of a shock for yours truly who had no idea that he was retiring so soon. In looking for his replacement, I am starting with the members of John's CRS Committee. They worked with John and are already familiar with the program. Hopefully, his replacement can be approved at the January Board meeting. John will be missed by the CRS Community, the IAFSM Board and especially by me, personally. We shared a lot having both been in the Air Force at one time.



Also, at that meeting, we re-arranged our membership year. We have in the past taken our membership payments along with our annual conference fee. That will not change. What will change is the membership year, which will now correspond with our fiscal year, May 1 to April 30. For the coming year, dues can be paid with the payment of the conference fee or up to the end of the fiscal year, April 30, 2009. If you do not include your dues with the conference fee, your membership will still be good until that April date. If you are not attending the conference, again, you can pay for 2009 anytime up to the end of April. You can also include your AFSPM dues with your IAFSM dues or you can deal directly with AFSPM in Madison.

IAFSM wishes John Lentz well in his retirement from IDNR and thanks him for his service to IAFSM as CRS Committee Chair. John will be missed!

In December, the Association sent a letter to our Senator and Representatives in Washington D.C., regarding the move to delay implementation of the new flood mapping along the Mississippi River. This delay is being promoted by certain levee districts due to levees that are losing their accreditation. The idea is to act as if nothing is wrong until the levees can be re-built and re-accredited. This, of course, puts the people behind these levees in jeopardy of not protecting themselves by carrying flood insurance. The Association pointed out that this tact is just wrong. People should be made aware when they are at risk.

Well, I think that I will wrap this up. I would just like to say once again that it has been a pleasure serving the Association these past two years as Chair. My hope going in was that I would leave the Association in as good or better shape than it was when I started (not that it was in bad shape when I started.) Time will tell if my goals worked out and that IAFSM is better for them. Without our Board, nothing would have been possible. If there is thanks to be given, it would be to them.

One last parting thought in this time of economic distress: Living on Earth is expensive, but it does include a free trip around the sun every year. Say goodnight, Gracie.

IAFSM Awards Nominations Needed!

The IAFSM Awards committee is once again seeking nominations for awards to be presented at this year's conference. The awards categories are:

Floodplain Manager of the Year

This award recognizes outstanding individual efforts and contributions at the local level.

Outstanding Service

Awarded to an IAFSM officer, a Federal, State, or Local Official, or a consultant who has gone above and beyond normal expectations and duties to promote or encourage IAFSM goals.

Stormwater Management

Awarded to a floodplain manager, an individual, a group of individuals, a consultant, or an agency who improved stormwater management or reduced urban flood risks through creative engineering, regulatory measures, or other approaches.

Mitigation

This award is given to an individual or community that has encouraged flood hazard reduction through a buyout program, retrofitting, preparation of a mitigation plan, or other similar mitigation efforts.

Journalism or Public Education Award

This award is generally given media outlet that has produced floodplain or stormwater management special features during the year. The award can include individuals or agencies who have contributed to outreach and public awareness of floodplain or stormwater management issues.

Legislation


This award honors Illinois law makers or local officials for their efforts in floodplain issues. The award can also be given to an individual who makes extraordinary efforts to encourage the passage of legislation or to a community that has adopted unique local regulations that promote floodplain management or flood damage reduction.

Lifetime Achievement

This award is the IAFSM's highest honor. It is reserved for outstanding longtime floodplain managers. These individuals' long-term contributions have made a noticeable impact on floodplain and stormwater management efforts in the State of Illinois. This award is not always given on a yearly basis.

If you have any awards nominations please email a brief description of the person or program and the award category to Paul.Osman@illinois.gov.


However...you must HURRY! The deadline for the awards submittal is January 30, 2009. The awards committee may request additional information to support any submittal. The awards committee will review and vote on each nominee. Awards will be presented during the Conference awards luncheon on March 12.



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IAFSM is Looking for a Few Good People! Nominate them NOW!

IAFSM members elect their Executive Board on an annual basis. IAFSM is seeking nominations to fill the positions of Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer and Secretary.



Who should be on the Board?

The Board should include representation from a variety of sectors and disciplines (state, local, private, etc). Board members should have experience dealing with floodplain and stormwater issues and have shown, at a minimum, a commitment to IAFSM through membership and event attendance.

Who should get nominated?

The nominations committee is responsible for securing and evaluating nominations for the elected positions. Nominations may be made by any IAFSM member, the individual, or the nominations committee. Only those nominees that meet the minimum requirements will be listed on the ballot. The nominations committee is charged with securing nominations for the various elected officers positions that provide representation from the various sectors and disciplines.

When are elections??

Officers are elected at the IAFSM annual conference. Nominations must be submitted by the conference registration deadline for consideration, no write-in candidate will be considered. Only IAFSM members may vote and all ballots must be signed. Nominations should be sent to the Nominations Chair: paul.osman@illinois.gov no later than January 30, 2009.

Name our Newsletter and Win \$100!

Our newsletter name ("IAFSM Newsletter") is boring! The Board of Directors is announcing a contest to name our newsletter. We know the collective brilliance of our members' minds can come up with something original and interesting! The Board is offering \$100 for the winner of the newsletter naming contest. Here are the rules:

1. The name should be short enough to fit at the top of the newsletter.
2. Members are allowed to submit multiple ideas.
3. Entries must be received by the IAFSM newsletter editor by January 31, 2009. Email entries to Jennifer Maercklein at jmaercklein@v3co.com or send via snail mail to V3 Companies, 7325 Janes Ave, Woodridge, IL 60517.
4. All submittals will become the property of IAFSM.
5. IAFSM reserves the right to modify the winning submittal.
6. IAFSM Board Members are eligible to participate in the contest, but the prize will be forfeited if the winning name was a Board Member's.

A Board committee will review the submittals and pick the top names. These top names will be on a ballot in the packet at our annual conference in March. All conference participants will be asked to vote for one of the top submittals. The final selection will be determined by the Board of Directors. The winner will have the option of receiving receive a check for \$100 or five years of free membership in IAFSM.

BRADLEY E. BRINK, P.E., CFM

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Don't Forget to Book Your Hotel for the 2009 IAFSM Annual Conference!

The 2009 conference will be held on March 11-12, 2009 at the brand new I-Hotel and Conference Center in Champaign, Illinois. A full conference brochure and registration form will be distributed later this month.

Lodging at the I-Hotel will be available at the special conference rate of \$119. Space is limited, to reserve your room go to www.StayAtTheI.com and click on the orange "Attendee Code" then enter the group code AILA. Reservations must be received on or before February 10, 2009. The hotel requires payment for the first night's stay at the time of reservation. Additional hotel recommendations will be available in the near future.



CEC and Training Opportunities

DCEO Environmental Workshops for the Construction Industries

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity is sponsoring a series of environmental regulatory workshops in February 2009. Workshop Topics include: Lead Hazards; Asbestos; Incentives for Energy Efficiency; Endangered Species, Consultation & Development; Erosion Controls & Stormwater; Radon; Floodplain 101; Disposal of Hazardous/Non-Hazardous Wastes.

The workshops will be held at 5 Locations statewide:

- Palatine, 2/4/09
- Galesburg, 2/18/09
- Decatur, 2/19/09
- Edwardsville, 2/24/09
- Carbondale, 2/25/09

For more information:
www.ienconnect.com/enviro

2009 Certified Floodplain Manager (CFM) Exam Schedule

- Champaign: 3/10/09 (I-Hotel)
- Bartlett: 6/19/09 (IDNR office)
- Woodridge: 9/16/09 (V3 office)
- Champaign: 9/16/09 (ISWS office)
- Rosemont: 12/9/09 (CBBEL office)

For more information or to register, please visit
www.illinoisfloods.org/certification.html



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IAFSM Committee Reports

Annual Conference Committee: The Annual Conference Committee is planning the 2009 conference in Champaign. To volunteer to help, email Jeff Wickenkamp at jwickenkamp@heyassoc.com.

Education Committee: To volunteer to help with future workshops, email Amanda Flegel: aflegel@uiuc.edu.

Newsletter Committee: To help with future newsletters, to provide comments and opinions on the newsletter, or to provide an article for publication email Jennifer Maercklein at jmaercklein@v3co.com

Stormwater Committee: Ideas and volunteers for future workshops are welcome. Please email Bob Murdock at: RMurdock@mbakercorp.com.

Wetlands Committee: The Wetlands Committee met is developing training workshops to be held during the 2009 Annual Conference. To volunteer with future committee activities, email Tom Kehoe at tkehoe@cbbel.com.

Jobmart

Visit our Jobmart at www.illinoisfloods.org/jobmart.html to view current job openings. Jobmart is a free service to members of IAFSM. If you would like to post a position, send complete information to IAFSM@sbcglobal.net.

Current openings include:

- Disaster Assistance Employee: Mitigation, FEMA Region V. Available positions include:
 - Floodplain Management Specialists
 - Insurance Specialists
 - Building Code Specialists
 - Hazard Mitigation Community Planners
 - Grants Managers and Specialists
 - Hazard Mitigation Grant Program
 - Civil Engineers (Structural or Hydrology & Hydraulics)
 - Hazard Mitigation Outreach Specialists
 - Hazard Mitigation Economic Analysts
 - Writers
 - Administrative Specialists
 - Environmental/Historic Preservation Specialists
 - Hazard Mitigation GIS Specialists
 - Computer Graphics Technicians

IAFSM Board Meeting

The next Board meeting will be on Wednesday, January 14, 2009 at 10:00 a.m. at Starved Rock State Park. **All members are welcome!**

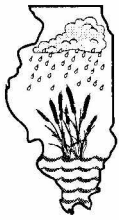
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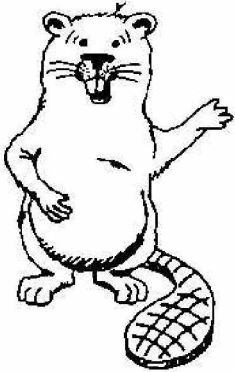


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Illinois Association for
Floodplain and Stormwater Management

Winter 2009

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. To advertise in this newsletter (\$100-\$200 per year depending on ad size) contact the association at IAFSM@sbcglobal.net.



IAFSM Officers

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For current Job Postings and CEC Training Opportunities, visit our website at illinoisfloods.org.

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Please notify us of address corrections or changes

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