

# Illinois Association for Floodplain and Stormwater Management



## Rapid Assistance Flood Team Guidance March 2020

Includes Information On:  
RAFT Information and Assistance Requests  
Roles and Expectations  
RAFT members waiver form  
Community request waiver form



## The Rapid Assistance Flood Team (RAFT)

The Illinois Association for Floodplain and Stormwater Management (IAFSM) created the Rapid Assistance Flood Team (RAFT) to assist communities in times of flooding or other natural disasters. Every year, flooding occurs somewhere in Illinois. Often, leaving the local floodplain manager overwhelmed. Illinois is blessed with some of the best floodplain managers in the entire nation. These floodplain experts can help communities complete the required damage assessment following a flood.

With nearly 1,000 members, the IAFSM is the nation's oldest and one of the largest professional floodplain management associations. IAFSM has become the voice of floodplain management within the State of Illinois.

### Volunteering

If you are interested, you must be active in the IAFSM and be a Certified Floodplain Managers (CFMs). Volunteers come from local, state and federal government, the private sector, and other professional disciplines. RAFT members have experience or will pursue training in post-flood responsibilities. By volunteering you agree to assist other communities in times of need, based on your availability. We will use



consistent and industry accepted damage assessment methods, selected by IAFSM, to ensure accuracy, equitability and efficiency. Required volunteer forms are provided in this guide.

### RAFT Assistance Requests

Local officials who need help with post flood damage assessments can request RAFT assistance through the IAFSM Floodplain Management Chair. Contact information is provided in this guide along with an example request letter.



The Floodplain Management Chair will coordinate all requests for RAFT volunteers. RAFT members participate when a request is made based on their availability. RAFT volunteers will travel on a work-day basis and are not reimbursed for hours, travel, or per diem. There is no charge to the community for travel or per diem and no overnight lodging is assumed. However, if there is overnight lodging, expenses will be the responsibility of the host community.

If you have additional questions, please review the Q and A section at the end of this guidance.

Erik Gil

IAFSM Chair

## **ROLES and EXPECTATIONS**

### **IAFSM – Floodplain Management Committee Chair**

1. Acts as overall coordinator of RAFT volunteer activities
2. Maintains RAFT volunteer contact data and forms
3. Coordinated annual training opportunities and same day deployment training with State NFIP Coordinator
4. Ensures RAFT member liability waiver forms are updated and signed prior to deployment
5. Coordinates logistics and volunteers for deployment to host community
6. Provides damage assessment packet and volunteer packet

### **RAFT Volunteers**

1. Maintains preparedness for damage assessment response by attending IAFSM training or completing online course IS-285 [Substantial Damage Estimation for Floodplain Administrators](#)
2. Maintains IAFSM membership and CFM license
3. Provides equipment (digital camera, clip board, etc.) and clothing (boots, mask, etc.) necessary to conduct damage assessments
4. Provides digital photos of damage assessments and digital files to be left with host community.
5. Provides a vehicle to get to the host community and conduct damage assessments.
6. Brings a personal photo identification badge to wear during inspections.

### **Host Community**

1. Provides official ID tag or letter from Community leader
2. If possible, provides a local host to accompany the RAFT volunteer while doing inspections
3. Provides a local contact or cell phone number for RAFT volunteer in case of emergency (police or fire)
4. Provide a morning meeting location and afternoon wrap-up location
5. Provides RAFT volunteer with digital or paper damage assessment worksheets and map with assigned addresses to inspect
6. Maintains records of damage assessments
7. Ensures follow up on damage assessments and compliance with floodplain regulations
8. If possible, reimburses IAFSM for any expenses, if the host community has the financial means or if disaster assistance funding is obtained.

**IAFSM Rapid Assessment Flood Team (RAFT) Membership Profile Questionnaire  
(Voluntary Agreement to Participate)**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Firm/Community/County \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ FAX: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Geographic Availability:    1) Chicago Metro    (\_\_\_\_)    2) Northeastern IL    (\_\_\_\_)  
   3) Northern IL        (\_\_\_\_)    5) Central IL        (\_\_\_\_)  
   3) Metro East        (\_\_\_\_)    6) Southern IL      (\_\_\_\_)

I am a Certified Floodplain Manager and my No. is \_\_\_\_\_

I have performed \_\_\_\_\_ number of damage assessments using FEMA's Substantial Damage Estimator Tool

I have \_\_\_\_\_ years of experience with conducting damage assessments for \_\_\_\_\_

**EXPERTISE TO BE PROVIDED RELATING TO DISASTER RESPONSES:**  
(damage assessment & estimating, expedient design, building code inspections, etc.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Emergency Contact:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Bus.: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Cell: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Illinois Association for Floodplain and Stormwater Management  
Rapid Assistance Flood Team  
Volunteer Waiver**

I \_\_\_\_\_ have volunteered as a member of the Illinois Association for Floodplain and Stormwater Management (IAFSM) Rapid Assistance Flood Team (RAFT).

As a volunteer, I agree to indemnify and hold harmless the IAFSM, its agents and assigns, and any persons who participate in RAFT activities for any actions or inactions during the course of the disaster response.

Furthermore, I agree to indemnify and hold harmless the host community, its agents and assigns for any actions or inactions during the course of the disaster response.

I understand that IAFSM will not reimburse my travel cost and a daily per diem. Any other expenses are the responsibility of the volunteer or the volunteer's employer.

Signature of RAFT Volunteer: \_\_\_\_\_

Community/Firm Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Volunteer's Community/Firm CEO: \_\_\_\_\_

Please Return to:

Paul Osman  
Illinois Office of Water Resources  
[Paul.Osman@illinois.gov](mailto:Paul.Osman@illinois.gov)  
217-782-4428

## RAFT Volunteer Equipment List

RAFT Guidance Booklet with sample documents

Laptop with FEMA Substantial Damage Estimator (SDE) software loaded.

Clipboard

Pen/Pencil

Tape Measure (100 Foot)

Folding Ruler

Local identification badge

Flashlight

Boots

Rubber Gloves

Masks

Digital Camera

Cell phone

Bug spray

Sun Screen

Substantial Damage Field Worksheets (likely provided by Host Community)

Health insurance information card



## SAMPLE COMMUNITY REQUEST LETTER

(insert letterhead)

(insert date)

Illinois Association for Floodplain and Stormwater Management  
35W749 Bluff Drive  
St. Charles, IL 60175

Reference: Request for IAFSM RAFT Assistance

To Whom It May Concern:

On (insert date), the (insert community) suffered severe flooding. This letter serves to request the assistance of the IAFSM Rapid Assistance Flood Team (RAFT) to assist local officials with damage assessment and other disaster response functions.

In making this request, the (insert community) agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the IAFSM, its agents and assigns, and any persons who participate in RAFT activities for any actions or inactions during the course of the disaster response. Furthermore, the (insert community) agrees and declares that any actions taken by any of the above-referenced persons in the course of providing assistance are to be considered duly authorized actions of the (insert community).

The (insert community) has designated the following staff member as primary point of contact for the IAFSM RAFT Volunteer(s):

John Flood  
Floodplain Manager  
(XXX) XXX-XXXX  
[fpm@XXX.org](mailto:fpm@XXX.org)

Thank you for your assistance with our efforts to recover from this disaster.

Sincerely yours,

(Local Mayor or Manager)

cc Paul Osman, State NFIP Coordinator, [paul.osman@illinois.gov](mailto:paul.osman@illinois.gov)  
Mike Sutfin, IAFSM Floodplain Committee Chair, [Mike2449@yahoo.com](mailto:Mike2449@yahoo.com)

## QUESTIONS and ANSWERS

Q: What is the RAFT?

A: RAFT is the Rapid Assistance Flood Team. Members of the RAFT are all active in the IAFSM. Members are all Certified Floodplain Managers. They represent local, state and federal government, the private sector, and other professional disciplines. RAFT members all have experience and training in post-flood responsibilities. RAFT members are all volunteers and have agreed to assist other communities in times of need.

Q: What is the purpose of RAFT?

A: Often, local floodplain managers will be overwhelmed following a flood. Illinois is blessed with some of the best floodplain managers in the entire nation. The Illinois Association of Floodplain and Stormwater Managers has coordinated a program to provide these experts free-of-charge to local officials following a flood.

Q: Who can belong to RAFT?

A: RAFT volunteers must be pre-approved by IAFSM. They must be Certified Floodplain Managers and have the experience to assist the host community. Volunteers provide their own vehicle and equipment. RAFT volunteers must sign liability waiver forms annually.

Q: Will RAFT assistance cost my community?

A: No, RAFT members volunteer their time. Per diem and travel are not reimbursed by IAFSM.

Q: How does my community request RAFT assistance?

A: A formal request letter must be sent to the IAFSM Floodplain Management Chairman. This letter also serves as a release of liability.

Q: How long can I expect RAFT volunteers to help?

A: IAFSM estimates that in most cases, RAFT volunteers can complete damage assessments in a day or two. If overnight lodging is required, it must be provided by the host community.

