



FEMA



# How to Get Paper Flood Maps

In October 2009, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) took a major step forward in the modernization of the flood mapping program and eliminated the regular distribution of paper maps.

Since that time, only the communities getting new flood maps have received a paper copy of their map from FEMA. All other users receive digital flood map products.

Over 16,000 map panels, affecting more than 3,000 communities, have been released since the policy went into effect. On average, the Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) Scans and Digital Flood Insurance Rate Maps (DFIRMs) have been distributed more than four months prior to the map effective date.

## Have All Paper Maps Been Eliminated?

Clearly, there are circumstances where a printed map is still the best tool. Just as there are times when you want to print a Web page, there are times when you will want to print a flood map. However, not everyone may want to print every Web page or print every flood map.

FEMA has provided FIRMette tools for several years that allow users to print a particular area of interest on a letter size page. The *FIRMette – Desktop* tool has been enhanced with a variety of printing options to allow users to print maps as they need them.

## New Printing Options

Users with a large format printer may print the entire map to scale. Users may select any portion of the map and print it on letter size or 11”x17” paper.

While the user-defined printing option does not preserve the official map scale, it can be convenient for many purposes. The Print Selection feature will shrink down large areas or blow up smaller areas selected to fit on the printer page. This will allow you to print the entire map body of most flood maps (excluding the collar notes, legend and title block) on a single 11”x17” page. You can produce a compact map booklet for use in the field on your office printer.

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## Other Improvements

The new *FIRMette – Desktop* tool allows everyone in an organization to share a single copy of the FIRM Scans on their local network. It also allows users connected to the Internet to find the correct panel by address and automatically download LOMCs related to the panel they are viewing.

You can download the *FIRMette – Desktop* tool for free from the FEMA Map Service Center (MSC) at <http://msc.fema.gov>.

## Ordering Digital Files

Data is available for download on the MSC Web site or can be ordered on DVD or CD by calling 1-877-FEMA MAP (1-877-336-2627).

## Local Governments Needing Additional Maps

- Some communities may need additional copies of maps.
- Communities with greater resources can print their own paper maps or rely on their GIS staff to produce custom products.
- Communities can also order printed flood maps from a commercial provider. Search for printing floodplain maps or printing engineering drawings for a variety of commercial providers.
- Communities may also have an ongoing business relationship with a local engineering company who can provide printed map.
- In some locations, the county government or a regional planning commission may be able to provide a set of printed maps.

## State NFIP Coordinators Needing Additional Maps

Where paper maps are necessary to perform the basic function of the coordinator under the Community Assistance Program State Support Services Element (CAP SSSE) grant, the cost of printing or purchasing paper maps is an acceptable expense under the CAP SSSE agreement. The printing of maps must be for internal state coordinating office use only. This should be the last option considered and planned expenditures for printing maps should be coordinated with the FEMA Regional CAP SSSE point of contact.

## Need Help?

For answers to most flood hazard mapping questions, including help with accessing and using digital flood map products, you may call a FEMA Map Specialist, toll free, at 1-877-FEMA MAP (1-877-336-2627), or you may e-mail a Map Specialist at [FEMAMapSpecialist@riskmapcdfs.com](mailto:FEMAMapSpecialist@riskmapcdfs.com).