

# FEMA FLOOD RISK COMMUNICATION TOOLKIT FOR COMMUNITY OFFICIALS

SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDE



FEMA



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# FLOOD RISK COMMUNICATION TOOLKIT

As a community official, your role includes communicating with a variety of audiences about their risk from natural hazards and steps that can be taken to minimize these risks or their impact. One important tool for this communication is social media platforms.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Risk Mapping, Assessment, and Planning (Risk MAP) program provides flood maps and informational tools for communities to better assess their flood risks. The Social Media Guide is one component of the Flood Risk Communication Toolkit for community officials. This Toolkit can help community officials communicate with the public about flood risk during the flood mapping process. The Toolkit also includes ideas and best practices for raising and sustaining awareness of flood risk and other natural hazards outside of a map update.



To see the full Flood Risk Communication Toolkit for Community Officials, visit:

**[FEMA.gov](https://www.fema.gov)**



## Social Media and Local Government

Local governments have a front row seat in their community and are ideally positioned to create timely, pertinent posts that spur clicks, likes, comments, shares, and views. Social media opens the possibility of a conversation with residents and helps residents navigate complex local government websites to find the resources they are seeking.

By tailoring posts to be personally relevant to your community's needs, you have the power to influence and amplify important messages. Additionally, some platforms use a complex algorithm that filters the user's feed to give greater visibility to posts considered more "personally relevant" to individual users, increasing the likelihood for local content to be more visible.

A community's residents will follow a local government's social media page out of local pride and the *promise of utility*. **Information locals find useful includes:**



### Promotion of local happenings

Fundraisers, town hall meetings, community fairs, etc.



### Celebration of public service

Highlight local leaders.



### Fostering connections

Connect individuals within the community to resources or organizations associated with health and safety.



### Sharing news and stories

Share local, relevant news updates.



### Making government more accessible

Encourage people to provide feedback, engage, and be active community members.



### Inspiring local action

Provide examples of things they can see or do easily to improve their property, neighborhood, or community.

#### THE CHANGING ALGORITHM

As with most technologies, some social media platforms make frequent tweaks and edits to improve their products. For instance, one platform's algorithm update in Spring 2018 focused on increasing meaningful interactions and is said to have given more weight to content receiving comments. In other words, the more a platform thinks a user will interact with a piece of content, the higher its score (and thus the higher it will appear in the user's feed).

While you can optimize your social media views by researching and trying to stay current with the algorithm **updates**, this is not a requirement for your community's social media success. Consider your audience's needs and post relevant and engaging content. That will never go out of style.

The information presented in this guide is a jumping-off point. No one knows your community like you do. Use that to your advantage! Based on what you know about your community, what would they want to see from your social media presence? Customize your approach and try new things. Trial and error is the key to social media success.

## Why Use Social Media?

Social media can be an effective tool that local, state, and federal governments can use to communicate and engage with the public. It is a powerful way to build trust and demonstrate transparency with communities and individuals alike. Recent studies have found that over 85 percent of local government agencies use social media platforms to get information to their constituents. **Social media is excellent for:**

### Reach

Social media provides access to a wide variety of audiences and meets a clear service demand from citizens. People are turning more frequently to social channels, rather than government websites, with questions, requests, or complaints.

### Accessibility

These platforms are available to everyone with a computer and/or smartphone at no cost.

### Usability

Using social media is simple to learn.

### Immediacy

Information can reach audiences in seconds rather than days.

### Conversations

Spur comments or spark discussions around hot-button issues that allows for two-way communication.

## COMMUNICATION HUB DURING NATURAL DISASTERS

Social media has increasingly become a central hub for communication during natural disasters. Friends and family can see when a loved one has “marked themselves as safe” during a disaster. Cries for help can be shared far and wide to solicit physical support, donations, and more for those in need when unexpected events turn worlds upside-down.

While not infallible—power and communication technology outages may limit access—there are opportunities to drive increased conversations and communications leading up to, during, and following natural disasters. Previous FEMA survey results indicated that a vast majority of respondents expected to hear about natural hazard risks from their local community officials, creating a new expectation and connection like never before.

# Social Media and Flood Risk Communication

Central to any flood mapping project is identifying flood risk and helping communities and individuals take action to reduce their risk. To accomplish this, community officials must focus on relationship-building to create a foundation for communication and education that improves engagement and encourages dialogue. Social media is a natural fit to achieve these specific communication goals during the journey to update a community's flood risk.

Consider social media outreach any time flood risk awareness is part of the discussion. **During your community's flood map project, opportunities for social media outreach to the public might include:**

1

## Discovery Phase

- 0 Announce the start of a project
- 0 Gather community information
- 0 Ask about the community's areas of concern
- 0 Ask what the community values and wants to protect
- 0 Identify where the community looks for risk information

2

## Risk Identification & Assessment Phase

- 0 Share initial findings regarding the community's risk
- 0 Discuss the importance of protecting property for affected residents and other audiences
- 0 Provide links to resources showing site-specific impacts
- 0 Discuss community mitigation action options and potential funding resources
- 0 Provide examples of previous and applicable mitigation successes

3

## Regulatory Update Phase

- 0 Share preliminary maps and changes since last FIRM
- 0 Offer interactive engagement to promote and drive the content used at public meetings  
*Reference the [Designing Effective Public Meetings Guide on FEMA.gov](#)*
- 0 Highlight previous floods in the community (with pictures)
- 0 Post links to and information about proposed changes to Flood Hazard Determinations resulting from the map change
- 0 Provide information about the appeals process
- 0 Refer homeowners to the MT-1 guide "How to Request a Map Amendment" located [here](#), and also source information from the Flood Hazard Mapping Updates Fact Sheet located [here](#)

### VIDEO SERIES FOR COMMUNITY OFFICIALS

This video series was designed to help understand, relate to, and communicate the objectives of updating the community's flood risk data and maps, including how to use updated flood risk information to increase community resilience. Direct your audience to this series to help elevate and prioritize conversations about flood risk.

# SOCIAL MEDIA BEST PRACTICES

## Establish a Presence

Having an engaged audience offers an advantage when communicating time-sensitive project updates as many people turn to social media platforms for timely updates. The first step in cultivating your followers is making social media a regular part of your communications.

## Strike the Right Tone

Maintaining a consistent tone across all posts and platforms is a key component of running successful social media platforms. A social media point person or team of people helps create a distinct and consistent tone, which reduces confusion and lends uniformity to social media platforms. **Best practices indicate that there are basic rules for effective local engagement, such as:**

RULE #1 .....

**Be Human**

RULE #2 .....

**Be Knowledgeable**

RULE #3 .....

**Be Current**

RULE #4 .....

**Be Friendly & Open**

RULE #5 .....

**Be Consistent**

RULE #6 .....

**Be Accurate & Truthful**

## Communicate About Flood Risk

Communicating with residents is key to creating and maintaining resilient communities. Residents look to local officials to provide risk information for their community, and they are more likely to take action when they understand their risk and know where they can turn for help. Use social media to share risk information and raise awareness.

# Opportunities to Use Social Media

## When flood mapping project update needs to be shared

Draft maps available

90-day appeal period opening and closing

Resources for site-specific impacts, e.g. increases or decreases in Base Flood Elevation, structures newly mapped into (or out of) the Special Flood Hazard Area

Flood insurance impacts and options (contact your FEMA Regional Office to speak with a flood insurance liaison for assistance)

## When passing along information from agencies like FEMA or NOAA's National Weather Service

Risk preparation/mitigation information and safety tips

Status updates on weather, meetings, or road closures

## To provide general or seasonally relevant flood risk education

Hurricane preparedness

Rainy or monsoon season

Tsunami awareness month (April)

## Mitigation activities

Examples of successful mitigation in your community or a similar one

Visit [FloodEconomics.com](http://FloodEconomics.com) for examples

Images of a range of mitigation, from small and quick to large and complex

## In emergency situations

Emergency preparedness kits and tips

Evacuation requirements and routes

## To gather information about the community and their interests

Polling activities about community members' primary flood risk memories, for example on the anniversary of a previous flood

Area(s) of primary concern

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## WHAT IS MEANT BY “COMMUNITY RESILIENCE”

When it comes to “community resilience,” many may think it only refers to a community’s ability to recover from a disaster. But it’s much more than that. To be a “resilient community,” those who live there—from government officials to business owners to homeowners—take action to prepare for and protect themselves before disaster strikes.

Think of the things your residents value most: the well-being of their families, safety of their homes and neighborhoods, protection of their financial investments. Also think of the whole health of your community and the quality of life for residents. Resilience is when you safeguard those things in advance and how rapidly you can recover after a disaster.

Proactive measures play an important role in mitigating risk, which ultimately results in a stronger, more resilient community.



As the digital landscape becomes increasingly more crowded, organizations are constantly battling the clutter and trying to find ways to break through the noise of other sources competing for their audience’s attention. The most successful efforts often focus on audience engagement rather than focusing strictly on awareness. Engaging your audience, particularly through newer platform features, is a great way to capture attention and drive action and loyalty.

## Engagement: The Importance of a Two-Way Social Conversation

While one-way engagement (likes, post reactions, shares, etc.) is necessary to maneuver algorithms and ensure that your posts are being seen, two-way engagement is necessary for building the audience’s trust. Building trust is a key facet of social media, particularly when peer-to-peer trust is on the rise and trust in government is on the decline (2017 Edelman Trust Barometer.) Each two-way exchange on social media (replies, comments, direct messages) works to humanize your organization and to build user trust. It also encourages future relationship building between individuals and the organization, leading to loyalty, increased word-of-mouth recommendation, and ultimately, advocacy.

Two-way engagement benefits your organization, too. Conversations with your audience lead to a better understanding of audience needs and concerns, providing opportunity for you to adjust your content and social media strategy in order to provide more value to your audience, drive engagement, and increase loyalty and advocacy.

## How to Activate Engagement

Make it clear that you encourage the public to use your social channels as a community resource by saying so. In your posts, invite comments and feedback from your audience. When someone does comment or reply, you should respond, and do so publicly so that other users know that you're the type of organization that listens and engages with the community. Invite comments and engagements by asking questions. Encourage your audience to tag friends in content that they would find relevant.

## Emerging Social Features

**Panorama or 360-degree photos:** Panoramas or 360-degree photos are a visually engaging way for community officials to create an interactive experience. Users can click and drag the image on a desktop to explore the image, tap and drag on a mobile device, or simply move their mobile device from left to right. [Learn more.](#)



### Broadcasting

Live video streaming to interact with viewers in real time helps to field their burning questions, hear what's on their mind, and check out their live reactions to gauge how your broadcast is going. This is a great way to make community officials accessible to everyone, especially those who are unable to join in-person events. [Learn more.](#)



### Chatbots

The use of AI and chatbots is commonly used by organizations to answer frequently asked questions from the public, freeing service staff to focus on more valuable and strategic work. [Learn more.](#)



### Polls

Polls allow you to ask your followers a question featuring text, gifs, or images and is an engaging way to receive feedback or understand how your audience feels about a certain topic. [Learn more.](#)



### Town Hall

Town Hall features helps citizens connect with government representatives at state, local, and federal levels. Ensure that your local officials are searchable within the tool and display accurate contact information. [Learn more.](#)

## Understanding Your Audience

It is tempting to think of your target audience as one group: the community's residents. However, there are many subgroups with unique priorities and concerns. As you craft your social media messages, consider which of your audiences you are trying to reach and which social media platform, if any, is the best channel. If your community has a Program for Public Information (PPI), as described in the Community Rating System (CRS), refer to the PPI Committee for target audiences and messages.

### Audience subgroups include:

- Homeowners, renters, and home owners' associations
- Water/Levee Districts and levee owners
- Real estate, insurance, and lending industry professionals
- Businesses and Chambers of Commerce
- Local Media – print/on-line/broadcast
- Civic organizations, Academic, Non-Profits, and Faith-based organizations
- Operators of critical facilities such as hospitals, nursing homes, and public safety agencies

## Social Platform Expectations

The social platforms visited by audiences change dependent on their content expectations, as each platform brings a different value to their life. **It is important to understand audience expectations per platform, as follows:**



### Twitter

Audiences use Twitter to catch up on news and current events, follow discussions, follow influencers/celebrities, and to share their opinions on topics.



### Facebook

Audiences use Facebook to talk to their friends and family, to share photos, to have private conversations, learn about events, and keep tabs on their local surroundings.



### Instagram

Audiences use Instagram to share photos, talk to and observe their friends, follow influencers/celebrities, and to share about their day.

Think about the content you want to share and consider where (which platform) users would be most receptive to that message. Or, think about how you can best adapt your message to fit into the social platform at hand based on what your audience wants to see on that social platform.

## Re-posting Content to Cross-Promote and Connect Messages

When sharing content from other community sources outside of your organization on social media, it is important to understand that you are no longer talking to your account's social audience, but you are now talking to the audience of the originator of that shared content. Use this as an opportunity to engage with new audiences and to pull them into your social sphere. Engaging with audiences' comments on your post will help them to see that you're a brand/page/account that they can trust. This builds a relationship and increases loyalty.

If content from another source is re-posted and you do not engage with the original source's audience when they engage with the re-posted content, it may seem inauthentic and prove counter-productive.

## Community Management

Your social media channels are an easy way for community members to engage with you to ask questions, share experiences, and provide feedback. It is important to maintain a consistent, available presence. Otherwise, you will no longer be the community's go-to resource, and they may look for information from other places.

### What does community management broadly entail?

- 0 Engaging in conversation with fans/followers
- 0 Responding to questions/complaints directly or guiding fans/followers to the appropriate channel or source
- 0 Reviewing and understanding your state laws around the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and digital archiving practices
- 0 Setting up filters for profane language, i.e., swear words. Blocking words such as "democrat" or "republican" may be seen as a violation of your audiences' free speech.
- 0 Thanking fans/followers for their input, when appropriate
- 0 Ensuring that internal roles and responsibilities are assigned for varying feedback scenarios

### IS THE POSTING AND/OR DELETION OF SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS IN BREACH OF PUBLIC RECORDS LAWS?

All 50 states have public records laws modeled after the federal Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) that ensure public access to government records. The language of most state public records laws encompasses social media, and many states have issued specific guidance for preserving social media records.

Agencies or public officials that post about government business on social media (regardless of having a disclaimer) are violating open-records laws of many U.S. states if they don't keep a record of the postings. Deleting posts without archiving copies is also in violation of these laws.

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## DO'S AND DON'T'S OF COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT

### ✓ DO:

- **Protect your community:** Offensive, violent, or discriminatory comments regarding race, ethnicity, religion, gender, or sexual orientation will not be tolerated.
- **Maintain a solicitation-free environment:** State clearly that your page is not Craigslist. Promotions and business offers must align with the good of the community and not personal agendas.
- **Embrace the diversity and struggles of your community:** Their stories are what make community management a rich experience. Each fan/follower's experience is unique, and we should treat it as such in our response.

### ✗ DON'T:

- **Delete ANYTHING:** Deleting posts, tweets, or comments from your social content will be seen as a violation of FOIA. Please check your state's specific laws pertaining to FOIA and digital archiving practices.
- **Engage in organization bashing:** We do not call out specific brands, groups, or organizations. Even if provoked, we will always take the high road.
- **Engage in political discussion:** Outside of delivering facts and information to our community, we will not take a stance on issues deemed "political." If users comment with a political stance, we will not engage/respond to those comments. We will not delete them unless they are cited as harmful or threatening. Before deletion, be sure to revisit the FOIA laws for your state. If your state allows it, screenshot and log the comment internally. In the event that a FOIA request surfaces in the future, you will have an internal source to share.

## How to Deal with a Crisis

### STEP #1

#### Listen for what people want to know.

Use social tools to monitor conversations in real-time to ensure that you are correcting false information and detecting early problems (such as harmful rumors). This monitoring can also provide an opportunity to help provide first responders with accurate information, hopefully before any false rumors spread.

### STEP #4

#### If you're not talking about it, someone else will.

Don't ignore the crisis on social media. Your aim is to become the one source of truth amid the chaos. If you don't take control over the narrative, someone else will.

### STEP #2

#### Be engaged, answer questions.

Don't ignore questions. Even if you don't know the answer, show that you're listening by responding with empathy and reassurance.

### STEP #5

#### You need a plan. Revise it regularly.

Have a crisis communications team that is trained to respond in times of crisis. By creating preapproved content that can be shared in times of crisis, organizations can be ready to provide instant updates to citizens.

### STEP #3

#### If you can't reach your audience, reach someone who can.

Use your influencer network to distribute messages to the right audience. Local celebrities, thought leaders, and politicians with an established social presence are all good places to start.

## Content Strategy

Developing and executing a content strategy is key to successful engagement with communities. **To execute a successful strategy, consider the following Content Pillars:**

MESSAGE:

CONTENT:

PILLAR #1

**RISK  
COMMUNICATION**

*20% of content*

Give community members the information they need to understand and reduce risk. Use this content to drive a rational reaction.

Help the community to understand resilience and what can be done to become a resilient community.

Show community members the progress being made by the community partnership.

Inspire the community to harness their newfound knowledge and to take action to protect their lives and properties (i.e., flood insurance, mitigation activities).

Infographics, guides, articles, reports, chats, live Q&A, tools (personalized information generators such as calculators or maps)

Demo videos, events, interactive demonstrations, photos

Community forums, checklists, endorsements, reviews, tips & tricks, how-to guides

PILLAR #2

**LOCAL NEWS**

*40% of content*

Keep the community informed with local, relevant news updates specific to your community. Use this content to drive a rational reaction.

Establish yourself as the community's go-to resource for up-to-date news and information.

News articles, press releases, curated content from other local pages or channels, helpful resources (organizations associated with health and safety, for example)

PILLAR #3

**COMMUNITY  
HAPPENINGS &  
HIGHLIGHTS**

*40% of content*

Promotion of local events, celebrating public service/local heroes, fostering connections. Use this content to drive an emotional reaction.

Embed yourself as part of the community by sharing content from third-party resources that perpetuates the community's uniqueness and kinship.

Fundraisers, events, highlighting local leaders, town hall meetings, user-generated content, profiling members of the community who have taken mitigation action

## Make the Case For Your Department

If your social media platforms are managed by a Communications Department, you may not be the person who sets content strategy. In that case, help your agency/community Public Information Officer (PIO) understand your messaging:

- Create an editorial calendar of items to share with your PIO
- Schedule regular meetings (bimonthly or quarterly) to discuss your upcoming communications needs
- Provide engaging content—videos, photos, interactive posts
- Think about your target audience—is what you want to share applicable and interesting to them?
- If your community participates in CRS, include the Social Media Manager in Program for Public Information meetings



## Sample Editorial Calendars

This section includes sample editorial calendars for five different scenarios. Take inspiration from these samples, including draft posts and proposed images, to create content that makes sense within your community.

**Yellow highlighted areas in all tables are flagged for you to fill in community-specific details and content.**

### WHAT ABOUT HASHTAGS?

Hashtags are used to categorize social media content into navigable lists. By including #<<KeywordsUsedTogether>> in a post on social media, it then becomes visible with other posts containing that same hashtag.

Sometimes, the best way to use a hashtag is to use an existing hashtag with an established conversation, such as #CAFloodPrepWeek. This will insert your message into the conversations already being had on this topic.

If you are creating the conversation, it is appropriate to develop your own hashtag, and remember, the point of a hashtag is to make conversations and content easier to find! So, if you are not planning on using the hashtag continuously, do not have the staff resources to respond to posts using this hashtag to drive conversation, or are not confident that others will contribute to the conversation surrounding this hashtag, it may be best to use hashtags that already have momentum.

## Flood Map Update

The flood map update process can be lengthy and complex. That's why we recommend that you continue to inform and communicate with your residents about the process, your progress, and the actions you are taking on their behalf. Also, regular communication about your ongoing mapping efforts will improve community engagement in the event that a disaster occurs. Be sure to use plain language and simple graphics wherever possible. If your community is in the CRS, use your PPI to develop your editorial calendars.

DATE:	KEY MESSAGE:	PLATFORM:	POST DRAFT:	IMAGE (LINK):
Weeks 1-2	News and updates	Twitter or short form	New flood maps are coming soon! Visit <a href="https://www.floodvillecounty.gov/floodmap">floodvillecounty.gov/floodmap</a> to learn more about how and why we were selected to move forward with a FEMA flood mapping project.	Paper flood maps image
	Risk MAP program awareness	Facebook or long form	What is Risk MAP?	Risk MAP process infographic (image TBD)
	Risk MAP program awareness		Why do we need new flood maps?	Top 5 Reasons graphic (image TBD)
	News and updates	Facebook or long form	#DYK: It can take a few years to accurately update a flood map? We'll keep you updated on our progress. Here's a look at where we are in our Risk MAP journey.	Risk MAP process infographic (image TBD)
	News and updates	Facebook or long form	It will be a few years before we have our new flood maps. But we promise to work closely with FEMA and keep you in the loop. Check out this overview of the Risk MAP process.	Risk MAP process infographic (image TBD)
	Risk MAP program awareness	Facebook or long form	Why are updated flood maps important? Click here to find out how the updated flood maps will benefit your community.	Risk MAP process infographic (image TBD)

## Seasonal Flood Awareness Campaign

You can continue to engage your audience even when there isn't a major project-related update to share. For example, try running a simple, visually appealing awareness campaign during your heaviest rain season. If your community participates in the Community Rating System (learn more, [fema.gov/community-rating-system](http://fema.gov/community-rating-system)), a seasonal flood awareness campaign may count as an outreach project and be eligible for additional bonus points if the campaign is implemented through a Program for Public Information.

**Pro-tip: Amplify your campaign by sharing the campaign message via other channels. Consider doing a broadcast PSA or using the same graphics for outdoor and print advertising.**

### FINDINGS FROM RESEARCH ABOUT PUBLIC INFORMATION

The objective is to change behavior. Good program works: behavior changes. Good programs:

- Are locally tailored
- Are positive
- Say what people should do
- Repeat the message
- Repeat the message from different sources
- Are evaluated and revised periodically

DATE:	KEY MESSAGE:	PLATFORM:	POST DRAFT:	IMAGE (LINK):
Week 1	Flood risk awareness	Facebook or long form	Before it rains... Know your community's warning system and sign up for emergency alerts <b>&lt;&lt;link for emergency alert sign ups&gt;&gt;</b> .	Mockup/image of emergency alerts on phone
Week 2	Flood risk awareness	Facebook or long form	Before it rains...Make a family emergency communication plan.	Image of family
	Flood risk awareness	Facebook or long form	Before it rains...Have an evacuation plan that includes your pets.	Image of dog/ cat
Week 3	Flood risk awareness	Facebook or long form	Before it rains... Prepare an emergency kit that includes medicines and insurance documents.	Image of emergency kit materials

DATE:	KEY MESSAGE:	PLATFORM:	POST DRAFT:	IMAGE (LINK):
Week 3	Flood risk awareness	Facebook or long form	When it rains...Keep your cell phone charging in case you lose power (and your chargers charged!).	Full battery icon image
Week 4	Flood risk awareness	Facebook or long form	When it rains...Don't drive through high water. It only takes 12 inches of water to carry away a small car.	Image of car in high water or road block for flooded area
	Flood risk awareness	Facebook or long form	When it rains...Turn on your TV or radio and listen for the latest weather updates and emergency alerts.	Link to local TV/ radio station (weather channel) online
Week 5	Flood risk awareness	Facebook or long form	When it rains... Check in with family and friends. Use the Facebook Safety Check feature if it's activated in your area.	Graphic for how to use Facebook Safety Check
	Flood risk awareness	Facebook or long form	If it pours... Take pictures of damage, both of the building and its contents, for insurance claims.	Insurance claims infographic/ checklist
Week 6	Flood risk awareness	Facebook or long form	If it pours... Do what you can to prevent further damage to your home (i.e., putting a tarp on a damaged roof).	Infographic showing measures to take to prevent further damage

## Event Promotion

During the course of a flood map project, you may need to host public events (particularly during Discovery and after preliminary maps have been released). There are several ways to promote these via social media. Use Facebook to invite residents, share updates, and track responses.

**Pro-tip: If you use an event management tool and promote your event using various channels, take advantage of the tracking links feature. Use a unique link for each platform. This will help you gain insights about the source that best drives traffic for your community.**

DATE:	KEY MESSAGE:	PLATFORM:	POST DRAFT:	IMAGE (LINK):
Week 1	Meeting attendance	Facebook or long form	Save the date! <<Floodville County>> will host a public Open House to discuss our preliminary flood maps <<Tuesday, January 9>> at <<time>>. Chat with local flood experts to learn how that will impact YOUR property.	Event invite image
	Meeting attendance	Twitter or short form	Save the date: Open House on <<Tues., 1/9>> to chat about preliminary flood maps.	Event invite image
Week 2	Flood risk awareness	Facebook or long form	Anywhere it rains, it can flood. How extensively can vary from neighborhood to neighborhood and even property to property. Chat one-on-one with flood experts about how local flood hazards have changed at the Open House on <<Tuesday, January 9>> from <<Start time to end time>> at <<Venue Name>>.	But It Never Floods Graphic



DATE:	KEY MESSAGE:	PLATFORM:	POST DRAFT:	IMAGE (LINK):
Week 2	Flood risk awareness	Twitter or short form	#DYK: Where it rains, it can flood. Chat one-on-one with flood experts on <<1/9>> from <<Start time to end time>> at <<Venue>>.	But It Never Floods Graphic
	Meeting attendance	Facebook or long form	#DYK: <<Floodville County>> has a new preliminary Flood Map? Our flood experts will tell you what that means and how it affects you at the Open House on <<Tuesday, January 9>> from <<Start time to end time>> at <<Venue Name>>.	Map image
	Meeting attendance	Twitter or short form	What's a Flood Map? Hear how the new one affects you <<Tues. the 9th>> at <<time>> at <<Venue Name>>.	Map image
	Flood risk awareness	Facebook or long form	How will your property be impacted by the new maps? Click << Local community link >> and come to the open house on <<Tuesday, January 9>> to discuss!	
	Flood risk awareness	Facebook or long form	Here's a story from << example showing a cross-link to a previously published source on this topic (as applicable/available) >> about new, preliminary floodplain maps and the open house on <<January 9>>, where residents can learn more.	



DATE:	KEY MESSAGE:	PLATFORM:	POST DRAFT:	IMAGE (LINK):
Week 3	Meeting attendance	Twitter or short form	Is your calendar marked for <<1/9>>? Chat w/experts about your #FloodRisk from <<Start time to end time>> at <<Venue Name>>.	Meeting picture
	Meeting attendance	Facebook or long form	What's your flood risk? Join us for a #FloodRisk Open House tomorrow at <<Venue Name>> from <<Start time to end time>> to learn more about the new flood maps for our area.	Flood sign image
	Meeting attendance	Twitter or short form (AM)	What's your #FloodRisk? Come to the Open House tomorrow at <<Venue Name>> from <<Start time to end time>> to find out!	Flood sign image
	Flood risk awareness	Twitter or short form (PM)	<p>#DYK: Our last Flood Map was updated in &lt;&lt;year&gt;&gt;. Click &lt;&lt;here&gt;&gt; to see the updated map.</p> <p>*Suggest replacing &lt;&lt;here&gt;&gt; with a link from one of the following sites, dependent on where your community is at in the map update process:</p> <p>Draft flood hazard data: <a href="https://msc.fema.gov/draft">https://msc.fema.gov/draft</a></p> <p>Preliminary flood hazard data: <a href="https://msc.fema.gov/fmcv">https://msc.fema.gov/fmcv</a></p> <p>Pending flood hazard data: <a href="https://msc.fema.gov/fmcv">https://msc.fema.gov/fmcv</a></p> <p>Effective maps: <a href="https://msc.fema.gov/">https://msc.fema.gov/</a></p>	



DATE:	KEY MESSAGE:	PLATFORM:	POST DRAFT:	IMAGE (LINK):
Week 3	Flood risk awareness	Facebook or long form (AM)	Not-so-fun fact: Did you know that your home is five times more likely to flood than be damaged by fire over the next 30 years? Learn more about your flood risk and check out the new draft maps for our area by joining us for Open House tonight from <<Start time to end time>> at <<Venue Name>>.	Meeting picture
	Meeting attendance	Twitter or short form (AM)	#DYK: Flooding is the most frequent & expensive natural disaster in our area.	Flood sign image
	Meeting attendance	Twitter or short form (AM)	What's your flood risk? Come to the Open House TONIGHT at <<Venue Name>> from <<Start time to end time>> to find out!	Know your flood risk image
	Meeting attendance	Facebook or long form	Tonight's the night! Join us for a public Open House on Preliminary Flood Maps FIRM from <<Start time to end time>>. Chat with local flood experts to learn how the new maps will impact YOUR property.	Event invite image
	Flood risk awareness	Twitter or short form (PM)	#DYK: 1/3 of the recipients for flood-related disaster assistance are in low- to moderate-risk areas?	Disaster Assistance image



DATE:	KEY MESSAGE:	PLATFORM:	POST DRAFT:	IMAGE (LINK):
Week 3	Meeting attendance	Twitter or short form (PM)	Tonight's Open House starts now! It's not too late to join us at <<Venue Name>> to learn about your #FloodRisk!	
	Meeting attendance	Facebook	What did you think of the meeting? Take this <<short survey>> and let us know if you got all the information you need. Insert survey link.	

## Flood Event During Flood Map Update Project

Frequently, the need for updated flood maps is underscored by a flood event occurring mid-project. Don't be afraid to be opportunistic! In addition to keeping your residents up to date on critical weather news, help them understand how to recover from the event and why proactive measures are necessary.

DATE:	KEY MESSAGE:	PLATFORM:	POST DRAFT:	IMAGE (LINK):
Disaster Event	News and updates	Twitter	#BREAKING: A severe flood warning has been issued <<for southern and western Floodville County>>. #TakeShelter #FloodvilleWeather	Weather map
	News and updates	Facebook	#BREAKING: A severe flood warning has been issued for <<southern and western Floodville County. Meteorologist John Freeman has the details>>. #TakeShelter #FloodvilleWeather	Weather video



DATE:	KEY MESSAGE:	PLATFORM:	POST DRAFT:	IMAGE (LINK):
Disaster Event	News and updates	Twitter	#BREAKING: The bridge over <<Floodville Lake>> is closed as a result of record flooding. All traffic detoured <<at Main St.>> Expect delays. #FloodvilleWeather	Bridge-Current conditions image
	News and updates	Twitter	Five accidents have already been reported in the vicinity of <<Floodville Lake. Southern and western Floodville Co.>> is also hazardous. Residents are encouraged to avoid these areas if possible. #TakeShelter #FloodvilleWeather	
	News and updates	Twitter	Check out the <<local media's>> coverage of the flood in <<Floodville!>>	
	Disaster assistance	Twitter	If you have been displaced from your home, <<Floodville County>> has opened three emergency shelters. Visit <<floodvillecounty.gov>> for more information on locations and for updates as new shelters open.	
	News and updates	Facebook	After <<yesterday's>> record flooding in <<Floodville County>>, many people are without power and an <<estimated 100 homes>> are severely damaged. How long will it take us to recover from this disaster?	News report video



DATE:	KEY MESSAGE:	PLATFORM:	POST DRAFT:	IMAGE (LINK):
Disaster Event	Disaster assistance	Twitter	Need assistance or shelter after yesterday's flooding? Visit <a href="http://floodvillecounty.gov">floodvillecounty.gov</a> for information about shelters and other disaster assistance.	
	Disaster assistance	Facebook	More than <b>&lt;&lt;20 severely injured&gt;&gt;</b> in the aftermath of yesterday's flooding and <b>&lt;&lt;150&gt;&gt;</b> families displaced. If you or a neighbor needs assistance, please visit for information about shelters and other disaster assistance.	City shelter-current conditions image
Post-Disaster Communication	Disaster assistance	Facebook	Wondering what's next for <b>&lt;&lt;Floodville County&gt;&gt;</b> ? Have questions about how you and the community move forward? Join us on <b>&lt;&lt;Wed. April 16 at 11 a.m. CST&gt;&gt;</b> for a Facebook Live Q&A with <b>&lt;&lt;Floodville Mayor Brown&gt;&gt;</b> and FEMA's Disaster Assistance Director, <b>&lt;&lt;Jessica Mitchell. &gt;&gt;</b>	
	Disaster assistance	Twitter	Don't miss the Facebook Live Q&A tomorrow at 11 a.m. to ask the Mayor and FEMA Disaster Director your disaster recovery questions.	
	News and updates	Twitter	What did this flood look like for you? Share your pictures using #floodpicsFloodville!	

DATE:	KEY MESSAGE:	PLATFORM:	POST DRAFT:	IMAGE (LINK):
Post-Disaster Communication	News and updates	Facebook	<<Floodville County's Jack Brougham>> shares the story of returning to his home after two days in a city shelter.	Interview video
	News and updates	Facebook	Now that the water has receded, <<Floodville County>> residents take stock of the damage.	Neighborhood-current conditions image
	Flood risk awareness/mitigation	Facebook	Now that the water has receded, <<Floodville County>> residents take stock of the damage. Here's a snapshot of the damage done in last week's flood.	Estimated loss infographic
	Flood risk awareness/mitigation	Twitter	How much damage was done in last week's flood? Check it out.	Estimated loss infographic
	Flood risk awareness/mitigation	Facebook	Floods don't have to disrupt our community. How to avoid this flood in the future? Prepare now.	Link to local site about flood risk
Post-Disaster Education/Awareness	Flood risk awareness/mitigation	Facebook	#DYK: Flooding is the most frequent & expensive natural disaster in our area. Learn how to protect yourself, your loved ones, and your property against damage in the future. Visit <<floodvillecounty.gov/floodmitigation>> for more information.	Insurance adjuster image



DATE:	KEY MESSAGE:	PLATFORM:	POST DRAFT:	IMAGE (LINK):
Post-Disaster Education/Awareness	Flood risk awareness/mitigation	Twitter	#DYK: Flooding is the most frequent & expensive natural disaster in our area. <<Visit <a href="http://floodvillecounty.gov/">floodvillecounty.gov/</a> >> floodmitigation for information on protecting against future damage.	Insurance adjuster image
	Flood risk awareness/mitigation	Facebook	Help us make the revised flood maps more accurate. Take this survey and tell us about your unique experience during last month's flood. Survey link here.	
	Flood risk awareness/mitigation	Facebook	#DYK: Every \$1 spent on mitigation saves \$6.	Mitigation Saves graphic
	Flood risk awareness/mitigation	Facebook	Check out these simple and affordable ways to protect your home against future flood damage.	<a href="http://fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/165910">fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/165910</a>



## After the Flood Maps are Updated

Though your community may have updated flood maps, the end game isn't the map, it's a community that has and is prepared to reduce its risk. There is still significant opportunity to use the new flood risk data as a foundation for outreach or a piece of a larger risk communication toolkit to keep the risk and vulnerability conversation ongoing.

KEY MESSAGE:	PLATFORM:	POST DRAFT:	IMAGE (LINK):
News and updates/connect to sense of place	Twitter or short form	New flood maps are available <<here>>! Look to see what areas are at risk in your daily routine. Where is your home? Work? School?	Weather map
News and updates/connect to sense of place	Twitter or short form	View your updated flood map! Visit <<floodvillecounty.gov/floodmap>> to see what areas of <<Floodville>> are at higher risk of flooding. Where is your house?	Paper flood maps image
Connection to Hazard Mitigation Plan	Facebook or long form	<<Floodville's>> flood maps are updated and will be included as part of the next Hazard Mitigation Plan Update in <<year.>> Click <<here>> to provide input on community priorities for Floodville.	Local Hazard Mitigation Plan image
News and updates/future conditions	Facebook or long form	The flood map updates incorporate the last <<xxx>> years of events and allow <<Floodville>> to plan for the future! Check them out <<here>>.	Image of previous flood event or a timeline looking into the future
News and updates/event promotion	Facebook or long form	Floodville has new maps for its flood hazards! The next step is to identify what you can do to be more resilient. Join us at <<xxx>> event to discuss.	Image of "resilience" like a flexed arm/bicep
Call to action/community input	Facebook or long form	After many years and great community collaboration, the flood maps are done and it's time to have discussions around making the community more resilient. View maps <<here>> and answer this short survey on how you'd like <<Floodville>> to take mitigation action.	Image of a community meeting/group collaboration

KEY MESSAGE:	PLATFORM:	POST DRAFT:	IMAGE (LINK):
News and updates	Twitter or short form	Use the new flood maps to identify and prioritize flood mitigation projects! #DYK Every federal dollar spent on mitigation saves \$6.	Mitigation Saves graphic
Community input	Twitter or short form	We have a new flood map. What other hazards does our community face? Click <<here>> to take a survey about what keeps you up at night.	Night owl/person awake at night graphic
News and updates	Twitter or short form	Our community is growing at <<x%>> a year. We can use our flood maps to identify safe locations for new homes and businesses. View them << here>>.	Graphic showing growth rate increasing
News and updates	Facebook or long form	<<Floodville>> is planning to stay safe and dry in the future; we are using the maps to plan smart development and make infrastructure improvements. Learn more about projects << here>>.	Elevated home image
News and updates	Twitter or short form	Did you know a home in the flood zone has a 26% chance of flooding over the life of a mortgage? Click <<here>> to see if flood insurance makes sense for you.	Town or neighborhood image
News and updates	Twitter or short form	Mitigation can save money on flood insurance and help small businesses reopen after a flood.	Small business image
News and updates	Twitter or short form	Elevate homes so that you can preserve your family's history. Use the <<FEMA flood maps>> to identify areas of highest risk.	Elevated home image
News and updates	Twitter or short form	Use the <<FEMA flood maps>> to set building standards for the future, so that the buildings built today will still be standing for the next generation.	Image of multi-generational family

KEY MESSAGE:

PLATFORM:

POST DRAFT:

IMAGE (LINK):

News and updates	Twitter or short form	Your <<new flood maps>> can help you decide what actions you'd take during a flood before the flood happens.	Preparedness kit image
Event promotion	Twitter or short form	The flood maps are updated but how has the risk changed? Attend <<xxx>> event to learn what you can do to be safe from flooding.	Image of person standing on a car during a flood

## City/State Examples

### New York City

City of New York (@nycgov), NYC Mayor's Office (@NYCMayorsOffice), NYCEM (@nycoem), FDNY (@FDNY)

Working in conjunction to share not only important updates and information, but also educating the public with valuable safety tips related to fire hazards and prevention, weather, and more.

**NYCEM** @nycoem · 1h  
Per @NWSNewYorkNY, a Winter Storm Watch is in effect for NYC for tomorrow's storm. Take time now to prepare: [on.nyc.gov/winter-weather...](https://on.nyc.gov/winter-weather...)



**NYC Mayor's Office** @NYCMayorsOffice · Jan 2  
The bitterly cold days continue today with lows of 16 and highs of 26. Stay warm, NYC.

**City of New York** @nycgov · 16h  
@NYCDHS has issued a #CodeBlue. Shelter is available for anyone brought to a shelter by outreach teams and also for walk-ins. If you see anyone at risk, especially those living on the street, please call 311.



**FDNY** @FDNY · 19h  
Most fires and injuries are preventable. Keep you and your family safe this winter by following these #FDNYSmart tips



**Winter | FDNY Smart**  
More than one third of home fires occur during the months of December, January and February. Most fires and injuries are preventable, you just have to [...] [fdnysmart.org](https://fdnysmart.org)

## Pinellas County, Florida

*Pinellas County (@PinellasCoNews)*

Pinellas County posts flood and map-related updates on Facebook and Twitter, and relays map update meetings via Eventbrite, Nextdoor, the County website, news release, and email blast.



## Evanston, Illinois

*City of Evanston, Illinois Government (@CityOfEvanston),  
Evanston, IL Police (@EvanstonPD)*

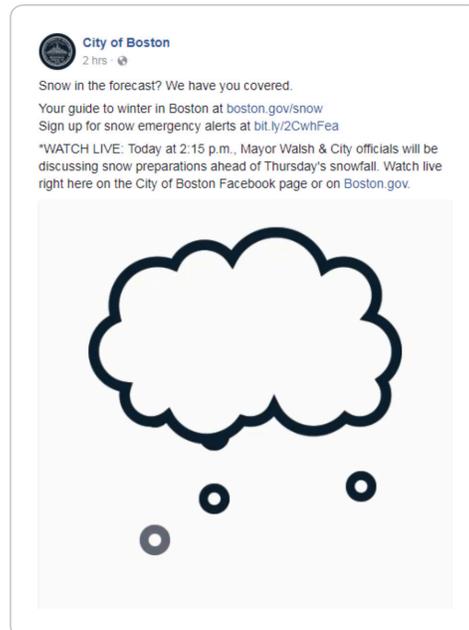
Include engaging imagery where appropriate, but stick to the necessary text and links when posting important updates/information.



## Boston, Massachusetts

City of Boston (@cityofboston), BWSC (@BOSTON\_WATER), Boston Fire Dept. (@BostonFire)

Repurpose imagery/animation, but update the message based on platform and information being conveyed, and share relevant tips from other accounts in preparation for weather.



## Sarasota, Florida

### City of Sarasota, Government (@CityofSarasota)

Using relevant hashtags and drawing in employees helps to put a face, or faces, to the page allowing followers to see and understand the people behind it. Throwback posts also provide opportunities to show what was (e.g., a property flooded vs. the same property with mitigation efforts in place).



# RESOURCES

## Social Media Content

- Flood Toolkit: [ready.gov/flood-toolkit](https://ready.gov/flood-toolkit)
- National Weather Service, Flood Awareness Week: [weather.gov/btv/flood\\_awareness](https://weather.gov/btv/flood_awareness)
- Flood Economics: [floodeconomics.com](https://floodeconomics.com)
- 100 Resilient Cities: [100resilientcities.org/](https://100resilientcities.org/)
- Protect Your Home From Flooding: Low-Cost Projects You Can Do Yourself: [fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/165910](https://fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/165910)
- CDC's Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication (CERC) manual: [emergency.cdc.gov/cerc/manual/index.asp](https://emergency.cdc.gov/cerc/manual/index.asp)
- CDC's Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication (CERC) wallet card: [emergency.cdc.gov/cerc/resources/pdf/cerc\\_wallet-card\\_english.pdf](https://emergency.cdc.gov/cerc/resources/pdf/cerc_wallet-card_english.pdf)
- Local USGS stream gauge: [waterwatch.usgs.gov/index.php?id=ww\\_flood](https://waterwatch.usgs.gov/index.php?id=ww_flood)

## Risk MAP and Mitigation

- [What is Risk MAP?](#)
- [Risk MAP: Information for Community Officials](#)
- [Risk MAP: Information for Homeowners, Renters and Business Owners](#)
- [What is Mitigation?](#)
- [Protecting Yourself Through Mitigation](#)
- [Mitigation Saves](#)
- [Mitigation's Value to Your Community](#) - Contact the Risk Analysis Branch in your FEMA Regional Office to learn more about how FEMA can help your campaign, [fema.gov/risk-mapping-assessment-and-planning-risk-map](https://fema.gov/risk-mapping-assessment-and-planning-risk-map)
- [Protect Your Home from Flooding: Low-Cost Projects You Can Do Yourself](#)