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CITY OF MUSCATINE PRESS RELEASE

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SECOND MISSISSIPPI CREST MAY PUSH LEVEL TO OVER 20 FEET

Third crest expected later as snow cover in Minnesota, Wisconsin melts

MUSCATINE, Iowa – A second crest is moving downstream and the Mississippi River is expected to crest in Muscatine at 20.3 feet at 1 a.m. Monday (March 25) according to the National Weather Service (NWS) in Davenport and data from the Army Corps of Engineers. The bottom mark for major flood stage at Muscatine is 20 feet.

Those living along the river can expect a third crest, probably mid-April, which could approach record levels as the snow pack melts across Minnesota and Wisconsin. Both states remain mostly covered by snow.

The Mississippi River gauge at Muscatine recorded 19.71 feet at 2 p.m. Friday, the highest level of the spring season, with the river expected to continue to rise over the weekend. The first crest (19.34 feet) came on March 18 before dropping to 18.66 feet on March 20. Since then, the river has been on the rise once again.

Riverside Park was partially closed to traffic on March 15 and a full closure went into effect Friday afternoon as flood waters nearly covered the entire parking area. The park will remain closed until river levels fall below 18 feet and cleanup can be completed. Also closed at the present time is River Road from Cannon to Sherman.

The “new” Mississippi Drive remained opened through the first crest and the Department of Public Works will keep a close eye on the Walnut Street intersection through the weekend. Water was visible in the inlets at that intersection this morning when the river stood at 19.6 feet, and could start to flow out onto the street as the river continues to rise.

The fact that Mississippi Drive has remained opened this spring and will continue to be open for as long as possible is one of the benefits from the two-year Mississippi Drive Corridor Reconstruction Project.

Before the reconstruction, water would start to back out from the storm inlet at Mississippi Drive and Walnut when the river reached 18.2 feet, cover two lanes at 19.2 feet, and the entire roadway at 19.5 feet forcing the city to close Mississippi Drive.

The reconstruction of Mississippi Drive especially the stretch from Sycamore to Mulberry, allows the street to remain open longer and closed for a shorter period of time. The street received its first test last October when the river crested at 20.65 feet.

Last October, water flowed out of the inlets at 19.8 feet and DPW closed Mississippi Drive from Mulberry to Cedar as both lanes of traffic became covered with flood water.

The DPW will continue to monitor river levels and prepare to close Mississippi Drive from Mulberry to Iowa Avenue if needed. Preparations have also begun to close Structure #1 (gate at Mississippi Drive and Mulberry) Saturday afternoon with the closure of Structure #2 (gate at 2nd Street and Mad Creek) expected late Sunday.

Detour signage will be put in place over the weekend preceding the closure of Mississippi Drive and Structure #2 at Mad Creek. The Mississippi Drive detour will go into effect with the closure of Structure #1.

In Wednesday’s Situation Report by the National Weather Service (NWS) out of the Quad Cities, forecasters expect major flooding to continue along the Mississippi, Rock, Cedar, and Wapsipinicon rivers. Warming temperatures in the Upper Mississippi Valley will contribute to the



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melting of the snowpack in Minnesota and Wisconsin with the most likely time period for the snowmelt crest coming from April 10-25.

The NWS had earlier predicted a 25-50 percent chance of the river cresting near 26 feet and a 50-75 percent chance of cresting near 24.5 feet the week of April 22. A record crest of 25.61 feet was recorded on July 9, 1993, in Muscatine.

If temperatures are much warmer than forecasted, the crest timing could be moved up seven to 10 days.

The second Spring Flood and Water Resources Outlook states that the potential for widespread flooding remains high this spring with soils nearly saturated and frozen, increased snow packs across northern Iowa, Wisconsin, and Minnesota, and an active weather pattern that shows signs of bringing warmer temperatures, increased rainfall, and the potential for additional heavy snow across the northern parts of the Upper Mississippi River basin.

[DPW Flood Resources](#)

[2018 Flood Preparation Overview](#)

[NWS Flood Potential Outlook](#)