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CITY OF MUSCATINE PRESS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Update on 2019 Spring Flood – Thursday, April 4, 1:00 p.m.

THIRD CREST OF MISSISSIPPI MOVING CLOSER TO MUSCATINE

Mississippi River forecasted to crest at 21.7 April 8 before slowly dropping again

MUSCATINE, Iowa – The “Snowmelt Crest” of the Mississippi River is moving downriver and is expected to reach Muscatine by Sunday (April 8) or Monday (April 9). The river has been on the rise for the third time this spring with the National Weather Service forecasting a crest of 21.7 feet as late as Monday.

The river has been on the rise since 1:45 a.m. Tuesday (April 2) when the level dropped to just below major flood stage at 19.96 feet. Major flood stage is 20 feet. The Mississippi River returned to major flood stage later Tuesday and continues to rise at 20.81 feet by 12:45 p.m. Thursday (April 4).

The National Weather Service (NWS) is uncertain whether there will be another, higher crest but the potential remains through early May especially if heavy rain occurs. Current forecasts indicate that widespread heavy rainfall is not expected for the next 10 days.

The NWS expects the Mississippi River to remain above 21 feet at least through April 11 and levels remaining above flood stage through mid-May.

The City of Muscatine is keeping a watchful eye on the river levels as they gather data on how the recently reconstructed Mississippi Drive responds to flooding. The initial point of interest was the intersection of Walnut and Mississippi Drive where water first appears flowing out of the inlets.

The Mississippi River has been at flood stage since March 15 but the “new” Mississippi Drive remained opened until March 22 when the Department of Public Works closed the street from Mulberry to Iowa.

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. After reconstruction, water was visible in the inlets at 19.6 feet and did not begin to cover the street until 19.8 feet, and that allowed the street to remain open longer.

As the Mississippi River continues to rise, the City is watching how the advancing flood water proceeds up Mississippi Drive toward Cedar and then to Sycamore where floodwaters could start to affect businesses located on Mississippi Drive. Expectation is that floodwater will seep through the railroad ballast rock at Sycamore and Mississippi Drive at 21 feet and cover the intersection at 21.5 feet.

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 City closed Structure #2 (flood wall located on 2nd Street at Mad Creek) on March 27 after installing Structure #1 (located on Mississippi Drive at the entrance to HNI) was closed on March 22.

Pumps have been activated at several locations including near Musser Park to move water that has seeped through the levee back over the levee into the Mississippi River.

The Mad Creek and Muscatine Island levees are inspected annually by the Army Corps of Engineers and inspected by the Department of Public Works twice each year, and has been certified to meet the standards of the Army Corps of Engineers. When the Mississippi River reaches 22 feet the levees are patrolled 24 hours each day.

Staff from the Department of Public Works are monitoring river levels and will implement flood response procedures as needed.

Roads ([Downtown Muscatine Detour Map](#))

- Mississippi Drive is closed between Mulberry Avenue and Iowa Avenue.
- 2nd Street closed at Mad Creek.
- River Road is closed from Cannon Avenue to Sherman Street.
- Highway 22 East is closed between the Fairport Fish Hatchery and Montpelier (Wildcat Den Road area).

Recreation

- Riverside Park is closed.
- Running River Trail System is closed between Cannon Street and Sherman Street, and through Riverside Park.

Facilities

- The floodwall at Mulberry and Mississippi Drive (Structure #1) has been installed.
- The floodwall at 2nd Street and Mad Creek (Structure #2) has been moved into place.

Events

- No events have been impacted at this time.

Other Measures

Pumps have been set, and appropriate gates closed in various low-lying areas of the city.

Sandbags

The City of Muscatine will provide empty sandbags to residents of Muscatine upon request. It will be the responsibility of residents / business owners to obtain their own sand and fill the sandbags. Empty sandbags can be picked up 8 a.m.-5 p.m., Monday through Friday, at the Department of Public Works, 1459 Washington Street, Muscatine.

Additional Information

Iowa 2019 flooding www.floods.2019.iowa.gov

Severe Weather Awareness Week and links to local NWS websites www.beready.iowa.gov

National Weather Service – Quad Cities www.weather.gov/dvn/

Levee Breach Study - <http://www.muscatineiowa.gov/745/Levee-Breach-Study>