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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**June 19, 2017**

## **Muscatine cleaning up from Saturday's storm damage**

*Intense 20-minute storm dumps buckets of rain with winds over 70 mph*

**MUSCATINE, Iowa** – Employees from the City of Muscatine along with crews from Muscatine Power & Water (MPW) were out over the weekend cleaning up streets and restoring services after an intense 20-minute storm blew through Muscatine Saturday (June 17) evening.

“We want to thank the City employees who worked throughout the weekend to clean up the City after Saturday’s storm,” Gregg Mandsager, city administrator, said. “We also want to extend our appreciation to the crews from MPW who worked long hours throughout the weekend and to the many residents who helped neighbors, friends, relatives, and even strangers clean up after the storm.”

The storm hit just after 5:30 p.m. Saturday with winds estimated to exceed 70 mph. The Public Works Department reported 2.75 inches of rain during the 20 minute storm with rain totals up to 3.50 inches not uncommon at various locations in the city. Pea size to golf ball size hail was also reported during the storm.

“We had crews out Sunday working to clean up streets and had the street sweeper out to help clear the downtown parking lots so that they would be ready for workers on Monday,” Brian Stineman, public works director, said. “We have four crews out today picking up debris and they will be working the rest of this week cleaning up.”

Stineman said that residents can take debris to the Transfer Station, 1000 S. Houser St., from 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday and from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Saturday. Residents



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can also call the Public Works Department at (563) 263-8933 to schedule a pickup by city crews.

The huge amount of water that fell in a short period of time created a torrent of water flowing down several city streets and ponding in areas that usually do not have problems.

“One of our crews is out checking the storm drains and clearing them of debris,” Stineman said. “More rain is expected and we want to make sure that that water has someplace to go and not into areas that could cause hazardous travel.”

Several streets in the downtown area became raging streams flowing toward the Mississippi River and a pond formed at Cedar and 8th which stopped traffic until the water receded into the storm drains.

The runoff also exposed a portion of Papoose Creek between Cedar and Iowa on 3rd Street.

“We will be investigating to see if there is a broken section or if this was just caused by the runoff,” Stineman said.

Papoose Creek, one of two creeks that run between West Hill and East Hill in Muscatine, was enclosed as part of a sewer project that started in 1895. The creek was eventually diverted in the downtown area into what is now a storm water system that empties into the Mississippi River.

The Musser Public Library suffered significant damage from the storm after a hole was punched in the roof of the building allowing the rain to fall inside the structure.

“We believe that a piece blew off another building and punched a hole in the library roof but we are still investigating,” Mandsager said.



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The library remains closed as the water is removed and the building is dried out. Several computers and some books were damaged by the water. The library is asking people to hold onto their materials and don't return them in the drop box. Late fees will be waived.

Musser Library has also cancelled all of their programs on Monday (June 19) and is looking to find other locations for their programming. Library staff will post updated information on their Facebook page.

Bill Haag, project manager for the Mississippi Drive Reconstruction Project, said that the weekend storm caused few problems for the project.

"Other than barricades being moved by the water and some basement flooding at a business, we were pretty fortunate," Haag said. "The underground contractor is back working and we may even pour some curb later this week."

Haag and Stineman both said that the signage contractor will be back in Muscatine this week fixing the signs that were moved or damaged by the storm.

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