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CITY OF MUSCATINE PRESS RELEASE

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WET WEATHER, FLOODING CONCERNS CONTINUE IN AREA

Drivers are reminded not to drive through flooded streets – turn around, don't drown

MUSCATINE, Iowa – While the National Weather Service has moved the area of heaviest rainfall further south over the next three-days that does not mean that a thunderstorm will not pop up and dump a large amount of rain in a short period of time similar to what Muscatine experienced Sunday.

The Water Resource and Recovery Center (formerly the Water Pollution Control Plant) recorded 3.70-inches of rain that fell in a short period of time Sunday night which caused the flash flooding throughout Muscatine. Several areas prone to flash flooding (Lake Park Boulevard, Isett Avenue, the intersection of Cedar and 8th, and the intersection of Oak Street and 5th) saw water rise several feet above street level while several other areas recorded swiftly moving flood waters that posed problems for drivers and for home owners.

A Flash Flood Warning was issued Sunday and continued into Monday as the swelled creeks and overwhelmed the storm sewer system. But that did not stop people from trying to drive through flooded streets, many having to be rescued from stalled and/or flooded vehicles.

“Our officers (and members of the Fire Department) were dealing with multiple issues with water, alarms, trees down, and stalled vehicles,” Brett Talkington, Muscatine Chief of Police, said. “We just don’t have the personnel to respond to all the calls at once.”

Talkington was impressed with how the personnel responded to an event that Fire Chief Jerry Ewers described as “out of the norm”.

“Our personnel worked as fast as they could and did an outstanding job,” Talkington said. “People need to just stay home or stay wherever they are at until the water recedes. And if you can’t stay, just abide by the rule ‘if you see water across the road, turn around so you don’t drown’.”

Ewers noted that you can watch the evening news and see rescue crews risking their lives to save people that try to drive through flooded streets.

“These people are not only putting themselves at risk, they are also putting the lives of rescue personnel at risk,” Ewers said. “When we have an abnormal day like we did with the last rain fall, the city just doesn’t have the staff to respond to every call in x amount of minutes.”

Response time, Ewers said, is correlated to the number of calls being dispatched to and the number of available resources to respond.

“Calls go into a que and usually the shift officer coordinates splitting up resources to respond with the most serious level calls first,” Ewers said.

As clean up continued from the most recent event, another threat for flooding was moving north from the Gulf coast.

Moisture from Tropical Storm Gordon is forecasted to move north into Missouri, Iowa and Illinois later this week with the heaviest rainfall in northern Missouri and spreading into central Illinois. The revised NWS is predicting two- to three-inches of rain in Muscatine as Gordon moves through the Midwest, but that could change depending on Gordon or a stalled front that will be located just to the west of Muscatine.

The National Weather Service-Quad Cities continued the Flash Flood Watch through 12 a.m. Thursday (Sept. 6) as a very moist air mass remains in place over the area. Numerous showers

and scattered thunderstorms are possible and some could contain torrential rainfall in excess of one to two inches per hour. The threat of additional heavy rain combined with already saturated soils could lead to an increased risk of flash flooding, especially across areas that receive repeated shower and storm activity.

Muscatine has received 5.77-inches of rain in September after receiving 6.45-inches in August with 3.2-inches falling on August 29 resulting in saturated soils and run-off of additional precipitation.

Moderate flooding is anticipated for Muscatine with the National Weather Service forecasting a crest of 17.9-feet on Wednesday. The Mississippi River is expected to reach minor flood stage of 16.0-feet on Friday and continue to rise through next week.

Major flooding is anticipated for the Cedar River at Cedar Rapids, cresting at 17.5 feet Sunday (major flood stage is 16-feet), and at Conesville, cresting at 16.5-feet Wednesday (major flood stage is 16.5-feet).

Major flooding is also anticipated for the Iowa River at Columbus Junction, cresting at 23.7-feet Sunday (major flood stage is 23.0-feet), and at Wapello, cresting at 25.1-feet Sunday (major flood stage is 25.0-feet).

[Sept. 5, 2018 NWS-DVN Situation Report](#)