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CITY OF MUSCATINE PRESS RELEASE

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MISSISSIPPI DRIVE OPENED TO IOWA AVENUE

City hopes to have rest of street ready for opening by weeks end

MUSCATINE, Iowa – The City of Muscatine reopened Mississippi Drive from Pine Street to Iowa Avenue as the Mississippi River continues to recede.

“We are cleaning and taken down flood walls as we can,” Brian Stineman, Director of the Department of Public Works (DPW), said. “We are looking at reopening the rest of Mississippi Drive by the weekend.”

That all depends on the weather, the amount of cleaning needed, and any maintenance that is needed.

City crews began work Monday on clearing the caked Mississippi River mud off of Mississippi Drive from Mulberry to Iowa. Drivers are reminded that this section of the street remains closed to traffic and closed to parking until the street is fully reopened.

Once the mud and dust has been cleared, the Muscatine Fire Department will wash away the remaining dust and mud from the street and sidewalks.

One area that will remain closed is Riverside Park.

“We hope to be able to start cleaning the parking area and street surfaces next week,” Stineman said. “There is a lot to do with the amount of time that this area has been underwater.”

The Mississippi River crested at 24.33 feet on May 3, the fourth highest crest in Muscatine history, and has been falling since, and is currently at 18.93 feet. The level is expected to drop below moderate flood stage (18-feet) Thursday, and then level off at 16.9 feet over the weekend.

The Mississippi River dropped below major flood stage (20-feet) bringing an end to a record 50 days of above major flood stage. The river has been above flood stage (16-feet) for 59 consecutive days, also a Muscatine record.

FLOOD ASSISTANCE

The Muscatine County Emergency Management Agency encourages those affected by recent flooding in Muscatine County to register with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

There are four ways to register for disaster assistance:

- Online at: www.disasterassistance.gov.
- Visit a state/FEMA Disaster Recovery Center (DRC). Go online to www.FEMA.gov/DRC to find the nearest location.
- Call 800-621-3362, voice/VP/711. Multilingual operators are on duty. TTY 800-462-7585. Phone lines are open 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. local time.
- Download the FEMA app on your smartphone at www.fema.gov/mobile-app.

Information on Iowa’s flooding and disaster assistance can be found at floods2019.iowa.gov.

MULTIPLE CRESTS

The Mississippi River crested three times during the 2019 Spring flood: the first coming March 18 (19.34 feet); the second on April 29 (21.95 feet); and, the third on May 3 (24.33 feet).

RAILROAD TRACKS RAISED

Canadian Pacific raised the railroad tracks from the switch for the Heinz spur east of the Cedar Street crossing to just west of the Iowa Avenue crossing during the height of the flooding last week much the same as Canadian Pacific did in 2014 after the river crested at 23.81 feet on July 4, 2014. Canadian Pacific worked with the City of Muscatine during the track raising event last week.

SPRING 2019 FLOOD RECAP

- A wet fall followed by heavy snowfall this past winter in the Upper Mississippi River Valley contributed to the Spring Flood of 2019.
- The Mississippi River has crested four times since March 15 when the river first exceeded minor flood stage (16-feet). The river rose and fell on four different occasions this spring due to snowmelt and rainfall, cresting at 19.34 feet March 18, 20.73 feet March 25, 21.95 feet April 10, and 23.33 feet May 3.
- The Mississippi River has been above flood stage (16 feet) for 59 straight days breaking the mark set during the 1993 flood of 55 days
- The 1993 flood had two streaks of consecutive days of above flood stage (16 feet) separated by a three-week period below flood stage ... 44 days (April 5 through May 19) and 55 days (June 10 through August 4).
- In 2019, the Mississippi River at Muscatine was at or above major flood stage (20 feet) for a record 50 straight days (March 23-May 11). The old mark was 32 days set in 1993 (June 27 -July 28).
- The 1993 flood had a total of 103 days above flood stage during a stretch of 121 days that lasted from April 5 through August 4.

FLOOD STRUCTURE UPDATE

- Flood gate Structure 1 (flood gate at the entrance to HNI off of Mississippi Drive, and flood gate Structure 2 (flood wall on 2nd Street) has been closed since March 22.

Structure 1 has been opened twice, briefly, to allow Canadian Pacific to move rail cars to and from the Heinz plant.

- The flood panels around the historic homes at the intersection of Mississippi Drive and Mulberry Avenue were installed April 9. Although it was not anticipated that the river level would reach high enough for the panels to come into play, City staff completed the installation and safety checks of the installation that is required every three years by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

APRIL CRESTS

- That April 10 crest was the sixth highest in Muscatine history and the third highest April flood crest. In 1965, following another wet fall and snowy winter, the Mississippi River crested at 24.81 feet on April 29, a level that held the record for the highest crest until the 1993 flood. The second highest April flood came in 2001 when the river crested at 23.50 feet on April 25. The 2001 flood is the fifth highest crest overall.
- Six of the top 10 and 14 of the top 25 Mississippi River crests have occurred during the month of April. Three came in July including the record 25.61 foot crest on July 9, 1993, two in June including the third highest crest at 24.42 feet on June 17, 2008, two in March, three in May including the fourth highest at 24.33 feet on May 3, 2019, and two in October including last year's 20.73 foot crest on October 13, 2018.

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.

Recreation

- Riverside Park is closed.

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- 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.
- The flood panels for the Historic Homes (Mississippi Drive and Mulberry Avenue) has been installed.

Events

- No events have been impacted at this time.

Other Measures

Seep 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>