



PRESS RELEASE

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LEVEE CLEARING UNDERWAY IN MUSCATINE

Required maintenance of Mad Creek Levee being performed by City crews

MUSCATINE, Iowa – Crews from the City of Muscatine Sewer Collection & Drainage Division along with members of the Roadway Maintenance Division have been working on clearing brush from the Mad Creek Levee during the past several weeks. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) requires the levee side of Mad Creek to be cleared of vegetation to preserve the integrity of the levee.

The City of Muscatine is responsible for properly maintaining flood control works (FCWs) that include the crowns and side slopes of the levee system. The primary function of the levee is to protect communities from flooding. Trees and brush can affect the stability of the structure and interfere with emergency operations during high-water conditions according to USACE, thus all trees and brush must be cleared and disposed of away from the flood control project.

City crews began clearing the Mad Creek Levee from the Washington Street bridge several weeks ago and have continued clearing toward the confluence of Mad Creek with the Mississippi River.



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MORE ABOUT MAD CREEK

The City of Muscatine lies on the west bank of the Mississippi River in Muscatine County. Mad Creek, a small tributary of the Mississippi River with a drainage area of about 17 square miles, bisects the city. Parts of 17 city blocks, in a roughly triangular area, mainly industrial, lie between the right bank of Mad Creek and the Mississippi River and have been flooded frequently during periods of moderately high water on the latter stream.

THE LEVEE IS CREATED

A project for flood protection along Mad Creek at Muscatine was authorized in the Flood Control Act of 1954. The plan of improvement consisted of the construction of a system of floodwalls and levees beginning at Mulberry Street and extending northward for about 1,600 feet along the Mississippi River, and then up the right bank of Mad Creek for about 2,700 feet to high ground north of East 6th Street. Appurtenant works included an intercepting sewer and pumping plant. Construction of the project began in 1958 and was completed in 1960. The federal cost of the project was \$1,169,000; non-federal cost was \$32,000. The project is operated and maintained by local interests.

FLASH FLOODING AN ISSUE

Many steps have been taken through the years to decrease the potential for property damage and loss of life. However, a flash flood that sent Mad Creek over its banks in 1961 swept a mother and her two young children to their deaths. In 1976, a teenage boy drowned while attempting to cross the creek under the East Fifth Street bridge. As the years progressed the creek's course was straightened out and the levee built up. In addition, the Lake Park Boulevard, Washington Street, and East Fifth Street bridges were raised. The East Fifth Street Bridge, completed in 2006, was 10 feet higher than the previous bridge.



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RAISING THE LEVEE

The Mad Creek Flood Risk Management Project was an approximately \$9 million project that raised the height of the levee and flood wall, and built two new closure structures between 2009 and 2013. The project provided an increased level of flood risk reduction for significant portions of downtown Muscatine as well as commercial and industrial areas.

The Mad Creek watershed drains approximately 17.3 square miles in the eastern portion of the City of Muscatine and areas to the north in Muscatine County. Due to the nature of the watershed and intensive development in the downtown area, Mad Creek is prone to flash flooding, experiencing flooding events in 1991, 1993, and 1998. Alternative plans were developed and evaluated based on appropriate engineering, economic, environmental, cultural, and social factors.

Major components of the selected plan include:

- Raising the height of approximately 2,300 linear feet of existing levees, 1,700 linear feet of existing floodwalls by 2 feet;
- 230 linear feet of new floodwall;
- New bulkhead closure gate at Mississippi Drive;
- New overhead closure gate at 2nd Street;
- New swing gate just upstream on 2nd Street;
- Installation of a new closure structure across the railroad south of Washington Street.

The selected plan also includes improving a section of the Mad Creek channel upstream of 2nd Street to reduce flood stages and installing an enhanced flood warning system.