

NEWS RELEASE

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Mississippi Valley Division

Release #: 08-04

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U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Louis District, joins flood fight

ST. LOUIS, Mo., March 19, 2008 -- The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers St. Louis District has joined partners in the fight against flooding in Missouri and Illinois.

The Corps' first step came late yesterday when the District stood up its Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

The purposes of this step were to begin the process of establishing funding requirements for follow on activity and to bring a team to heightened readiness and preparedness and to establish necessary reporting procedures to keep everyone well informed.

The District has also deployed two flood fight teams into the field.

One team has gone to Valley Park to assist that city on the Meramec River to prepare for an expected crest sometime Saturday, March 22. Valley Park is protected by a levee that was completed in 2005. While the city has conducted drills to exercise preparation to use the levee, this marks the first time the system will be tested under actual flood conditions. Corps experts are coordinating with the city to review procedures and processes for closing access gates and drains in the levee.

The Corps also responded to a request from the city late yesterday by providing some 11,000 sand bags to be held in readiness if they are needed.

Another team has been sent to the Illinois side of the Mississippi River across from Cape Girardeau to assess impacts of overtopping of the Miller Pond Drainage District Levee on Clear Creek. That levee, which is a 50-year-level agricultural levee, was overtopped Tuesday evening and Corps experts are joining their local counterparts to assess damage and plan post-flood steps to be taken. A report from that team today confirmed that the levee was overtopped, and not breached. They observed some scour damage that will require repairs when the water subsides.

In addition, at the Wappapello Lake project south of St. Louis, the Corps has closed the Greenville Campground due to flooding of the access road. The Corps is notifying property owners down stream of projected necessary discharges that will increased to control lake elevations. This will enable them to take steps to best protect their property.

Current predictions of the National Weather Service also call for some flooding at Corps facilities at Locks 24 and 25 in Clarkesville and Winfield, Mo., as well as in Grafton, Ill. There is also some predicted continued flooding on the Illinois River, although we are not now planning extraordinary measures against these possibilities.

The Corps of Engineers in St. Louis provides technical assistance and advice to municipal and county authorities, who in turn use their public works personnel and equipment as well as contractors to carry out actual flood fighting measures.

Information about river stages is available on the District's webpage at:
<http://mvs-wc.mvs.usace.army.mil/dresriv.html>

The Mississippi Valley Division includes portions of 12 states and encompasses 370,000 square miles. The [Mississippi Valley Division](#) includes six district offices, which are responsible for conducting programs and activities and are located in St. Paul, Minn.; Rock Island, Ill.; St. Louis, Mo.; Memphis, Tenn.; Vicksburg, Miss.; and New Orleans, La.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is a major Army command with a broad set of missions and capabilities. One of its missions is to provide assistance, within its authorities, when natural disasters or other emergencies occur.

Emergency preparedness and response is primarily a state and local responsibility. However, in instances when the nature of the disaster exceeds the capabilities of state and local interests, the Mississippi Valley Division may provide help to save human life, prevent immediate human suffering or relieve property damage.

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