

NEWS RELEASE

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Mississippi Valley Division

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Rivers Cresting in St. Louis Metropolitan Area, Heading South

ST. LOUIS, Mo., March 22, 2008 -- Rivers continue to crest in and around the St. Louis Metropolitan area following torrential rains early this week. The Missouri River crested in St. Charles Thursday at 27.5 feet and was at 25.7 today at 3 p.m. The Mississippi River crested in St. Louis yesterday at 30.8 feet and is slowly falling, measuring at 30.6 feet today at 3 p.m.

Most recently the Meramec River at the Valley Park gage crested this morning at 37.8 feet, below the earlier forecasted crest of 40 feet. The Valley Park Levee successfully weathered its first major flood event. The levee is built to withstand a 100 year flood event; today's crest would be approximately an 80 year flood event.

The Meramec River is expected to crest at Arnold tomorrow at a half a foot lower than earlier expected. The forecasted crest is currently 40.5 feet. Once the Meramec River crests in Arnold the flood waters will enter the Mississippi River.

Three swollen rivers – the Meramec in Missouri, and Kaskaskia and Big Muddy in Illinois – are contributing large flows to the Mississippi River. All three rivers enter the Mississippi above Cape Girardeau.

The Mississippi River at the Cape Girardeau gage is expected to crest Sunday at 42 feet. The Ohio River at Cairo, Ill., near the confluence with the Mississippi River, is forecasted to crest on Tuesday at 54 feet. With these forecasted river stages, the Army Corps of Engineers does not anticipate any issues with levees located along the Middle Mississippi River, between St. Louis and Cairo, on either side of the river.

The District's Kaskaskia Lock and Dam at river mile 0.8 on the Kaskaskia River suspended operations Thursday. Lock personnel removed the lock's gears and motors to protect them from flood damage as the river reached an elevation of 380.5 feet. This is a normal practice during a high water event to ensure the lock can return to normal services once the flood waters dissipate.

The lock will remain closed until river stages fall below 380.5, expected in the middle of next week.

The District has distributed over half a million sandbags and 226 plastic rolls to counties and cities, which in turn distribute them to the public.

Since Tuesday's storm, the St. Louis District's five reservoirs have seen inflows totaling 329 billion gallons, releasing only 63 billion gallons. As of today the reservoirs are holding back 266 billion gallons of water from downstream communities.

Here are individual numbers for each reservoir. Flows and current storage are in billion gallons. Storage numbers continue to rise for Carlyle and Shelbyville but the other three lakes have crested.

Lake	In-flows	Out-flows	Current Storage	Feet above Winter Pool
Wappapello, Mo.	152	24	128	32.3
Carlyle, Ill.	69	18	51	6.4
Mark Twain, Mo.	54	5	49	8.5
Rend, Ill.	39	8	31	7
Shelbyville, Ill.	15	8	7	6.3

Wappapello Lake and Rend Lake have implemented High Water Plan activities, doing increased monitoring of the dam. These actions are standard procedure and taken when the lake elevation reaches a certain level, not because there is a concern. All dams are performing well and have greatly reduced flooding downstream.

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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