

NEWS RELEASE

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Mississippi Valley Division

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River Crests moving south from St. Louis Metropolitan Area

ST. LOUIS, Mo., March 23, 2008 -- Rivers have crested in and around the St. Louis Metropolitan area. The Missouri River crested in St. Charles Thursday at 27.5 feet (flood stage is 25 feet) and was at 25.3 feet today at noon. The Mississippi River crested in St. Louis yesterday at 30.8 feet (flood stage 30 feet) and is slowly falling, reading 30.6 feet today at noon.

The Meramec River at Valley Park crested yesterday at 37.8 feet (flood state 16.0 feet) and had fallen nearly five feet to 33.1 feet by noon today. The Valley Park Levee successfully weathered its first major flood event. The levee is built to withstand a 100 year flood event; yesterday's crest would be approximately an 80 year flood event.

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 41 feet. The Ohio River at Cairo, Ill., near the confluence with the Mississippi River, is forecasted to crest on Tuesday at 54 feet. Flood stages are reached at 32 feet in Cape Girardeau, but the city is protected by a flood wall to some 54.3 feet on the gage.

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 518,000 sandbags and 266 rolls of plastic for waterproofing 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, and are continuing to hold about three-quarters of that run off until river levels begin to drop.

The St. Louis District deployed four of its seven flood fight technical teams during this high water event. Two of them maintained an around the clock presence in Valley Park and Southwestern Illinois for two days. As of Sunday, with concurrence of the city, the team from Valley Park has been stood down. We are still maintaining a presence alongside county and levee district officials in Southwestern Illinois until threats on the Mississippi and Big Muddy Rivers have passed.

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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