



**US Army Corps
of Engineers** ®
Kansas City District

News Release

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Kansas City, Missouri 64106-2896
Phone: (816) 389-3486 Fax (816) 389-2021*

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Corps repairs on levees damaged in 2007 protect homes, businesses and this year's crops

The Missouri River in Missouri has been at or above flood stage for most of the month. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers - Kansas City District has been busy issuing flood fight supplies to local communities and levee districts in Missouri and in Iowa. In addition, the Corps, at the request of the local levee district sponsor, has been providing engineering and technical support to various levee districts in their flood fight efforts. While levels in much of the river have not reached or exceeded last years May 2007 flood, crests at many gaging stations registered in the top 10 levels in the historic record. This has resulted in extensive flooding of unprotected low lying areas on the floodplain. After many years of drought, for many floodplain residents this seems like an instant replay of last years flood event. Repairs, undertaken by the Corps of Engineers, to last years flood damages to Federal and non-Federal levees under authority of Public Law 84-99 of the Flood Control Act of 1944 have provided important protection to homes, businesses and this years crops.

Last year there were three main flood events in the Kansas City District, one in May and two in July. The May event was the largest affecting the Kansas and Missouri River basins. Initial forecast by National Weather Service for the May flood indicated that at some locations flood levels could exceed those experienced in the Great Flood of 1993. Luckily those levels were not reached, but at several gaging stations last years event was in the top five of the historic record. The July events affected central and southeastern Kansas and south-central Missouri. These events caused serious damage to the flood damage reduction systems in Osawatomie, Salina, and Abilene, Kansas. When it was all said and done, the Corps' Kansas City District received request for rehabilitation assistance, under Public Law 84-99, for 27 non-Federal and 9 Federal levee units damaged by last years floods. These damages ranged from extensive areas of lost sod cover, scour and erosion, damaged drainage structures to major breaches. These damages if left unrepaired made these flood damage reduction projects more susceptible to failure and less likely to perform adequately in a future flood event. Until repaired, the major breaches would leave large areas of the flood plain totally unprotected from future flooding.

The Corps working with the local levee district sponsors set about making the initial damage inspections, developing designs for repairs, evaluating the cost/benefit ratio of various repair alternatives, assessing the environmental effects of the proposed actions and requesting funding from higher headquarters needed to complete the project repairs. Several of the local levee sponsors with the most serious breaches constructed temporary protection to provide some level of protection until permanent repairs were completed. "With 2008 having a very wet

late winter and early spring, weather conditions made construction of the earthen levee repairs very difficult."

The 2008 spring flood season came early to Missouri. In March, levels on the Grand River went well above flood stage. By that time, all breaches from the previous year's flood had been permanently repaired by the Corps or temporarily repaired by the local levee sponsor, preventing further damages. In spite of the weather, Corps' construction crews and Corps' contractors continued their efforts to complete the rehabilitation of the damaged levees prior to the spring floods. At this time, none of the levees damaged in the May 2007 flood and repaired by the Corps have failed. As river levels finally begin to drop, local levee district sponsors are breathing a sigh of relief and assessing the damages caused by the June 2008 flood. Looking ahead there's still a good a month of flood season left and historically the record floods in 1951 and 1993 both occurred in July. As soon as the water levels drop below flood stage, the Corps will be announcing the application period for public sponsors to apply for rehabilitation assistance for their flood damaged flood control projects. For qualifying damages, emergency repairs will begin soon after that to ensure that homes, businesses and agricultural land are protected prior to the next flood season.