



Media Release

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

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Tuttle Creek Dam Safety Exercise, Siren Testing and School Evacuation

MANHATTAN, Kan. – Preparation for a potential earthquake in the Manhattan area and testing of the Tuttle Creek Dam Failure Warning System will continue here on Wednesday, October 20th with a Dam Safety Exercise. This exercise is being coordinated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Kansas City District and involves 100 people from across the country from 20 different city, county, state and Federal agencies. This exercise will allow agencies to practice responding to an earthquake and its impacts on the community and on Tuttle Creek Dam.

This exercise will not involve activities in the field or the actual movement of personnel or equipment and is not open to the public. Agency representatives will be available to the media at 9:30 am and 11:00 am at the Manhattan Fire Department Headquarters at 2000 Denison Avenue.

As part of the dam safety exercise, at 1:00 pm the Tuttle Creek Dam Failure Warning System sirens will sound. Only the six new sirens will broadcast the voice messages and multiple siren tones. This test will be the final verification that the new sirens are fully operational. During this test, a voice message will indicate that “This is a test”. The tornado warning tone will sound, followed by the civil defense tone, and then the dam safety evacuation tone will sound. After all tones have sounded, a voice message will indicate that “This has been a test”. The evacuation tone is distinctly different than the other two tones. Residents should not take any action as a result of these tests. The Tuttle Creek Dam Failure Warning System will be tested monthly during routine tornado warning tests on the first Monday of each month.

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When the sirens sound, the 375 students of Eisenhower Middle School at 800 Walters Drive will practice evacuating by walking to the Meadowlark Hills Retirement Center west of Tuttle Creek Boulevard. As part of this evacuation, Tuttle Creek Boulevard will be closed while students cross the road at Northfield road.

The Kansas City District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers constructed the six siren towers at Sojourner Truth Park, the City of Manhattan Water Treatment Facility, Northeast Community Park, Eisenhower Baseball Complex, the intersection of Casement and Barnes roads, and Tuttle Creek Outlet Park.

The Tuttle Creek Dam Failure Warning System and all associated exercises and testing have been cooperative efforts between the Corps of Engineers and local emergency management, emergency response and law enforcement officials.

The Dam Failure Warning System is designed to alert the community immediately downstream of Tuttle Creek Dam of the need to evacuate in the event of a potential dam failure caused by an earthquake.

Although the chances of an earthquake of this magnitude occurring near Manhattan are very small, the warning system will help protect the local community while the Corps of Engineers modifies Tuttle Creek Dam so that it meets current dam safety standards for earthquake effects. This construction on the dam will begin in 2005.

For more information about the Tuttle Creek Dam Failure Warning System, see the Corps Web site at <http://www.nwk.usace.army.mil/projects/tcdam/index.htm> or call Eric Cramer (816) 983-3487.