



US Army Corps
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New Orleans District

News Release

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Atchafalaya warning: High-water 2007 is here

NEW ORLEANS—Atchafalaya Basin interests have been warned by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers—as in every year—that the Mississippi River’s high-water season of 2007 is here.

“It might be necessary to operate the floodways that you are occupying, and thus flood homes, lands, buildings and trailers,” said Col. Richard Wagenaar, commander, New Orleans District, in the 2007 warning letter.

The letter was sent to all landowners, trailer owners, residents, lessees and lease operators in the:

- Atchafalaya Basin.
- West Atchafalaya Floodway
- Morganza Floodway
- Bayou des Glaises Loop
- Old River Control Structure Project

“The function of the floodways is to safely pass the flood waters that may be generated in the Mississippi River and its tributaries to the Gulf of Mexico,” Wagenaar said.

If operation of the floodways is required, public notice will be given through [parish](#) Homeland Security & Emergency Preparedness Offices (formerly Civil Defense), and news media, sufficiently in advance to allow time to evacuate people and livestock and to remove personal property.

Quick action must be taken to protect life and property. If the water enters the floodways, depths are estimated to reach between 14 and 25 feet depending on the location of the property.

“Be aware that the Mississippi River is unpredictable. Last year the river was tame. This year, the Mississippi has surpassed all stages reached in 2006,” Wagenaar said. The 2007 peak came Feb. 1, with a stage of 12.6 feet at New Orleans, compared to a 2006 peak of 9.68 feet on March 30.

Water in the Atchafalya Basin is most directly related to the combined flows of the Mississippi and Red rivers at Old River, of which 30 percent is allotted to the basin. The peak flow of the combined rivers this year to date was 1.33 million cubic feet per second on Jan. 28. Last year, the full-year peak was 1.04 million cfs on March 28.

Col. Wagenaar’s letter was mailed Jan. 31 to about 1,100 addressees subject to possible flood evacuation. Copies were also sent to state and local officials, including levee districts and the Emergency Preparedness Offices.

[Mississippi River stages](#)
[Col. Wagenaar’s 2007 warning letter](#)