



US Army Corps  
of Engineers  
Mississippi Valley Division



## Corps Hurricane Response

*Task Force Hope Status Report*

*July 10, 2006*

# Corps Experts To Appear Weekly On Radio & Television Shows

## New Orleans Stations Host Corps Representa- tives To Discuss Hurri- cane Related Issues

In an on-going effort to disseminate information to the public about Corps of Engineers work, Corps representatives will appear regularly on radio and television shows in New Orleans.

The Corps of Engineers, New Orleans District, was approached by WLAE, the local Public Broadcasting System (PBS), to have Corps experts appear as part of its half-hour, weekly program "Greater New Orleans – Road to Recovery". The show is hosted and executive produced by Tom Bagwill. The live-to-tape show will air every Thursday at 7:00 p.m., and again at 11:00 p.m. on Cox Channel 14.

"This show will be an in-depth discussion every week about the work that's been done and what work lies ahead," said Bagwill. The first show was taped on July 6 and featured Col. Richard Wagenaar, Commander of the New Orleans District, Corps of Engineers.

WWL FM 105.3 and WWL AM 870 have offered the Corps a weekly 20-minute segment on Thursdays at 6:40 a.m. This is the morning drive program with Bob Delgiorno. The

### Brig. Gen. Crear Officiates At Kindergarten Ceremonies



**Brig. Gen. Robert Crear, Commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Mississippi Valley Division, posed recently with Vivienne (left) and Martha Lapeyre, twins who are students at Ecole Bilingue, a kindergarten in New Orleans. The Corps of Engineers built two modular classroom units for the school and Crear officiated at the ribbon-cutting ceremonies. Since the school is certified by the French Minister of Education, French Consul General Pierre Lebovics also participated in the ceremonies. More photos on page 2. (USACE photo)**

format is an update by the Corps with discussion by Delgiorno and call-in questions from listeners.

"We are using every means offered to us," said Col. Wagenaar, "to communicate with the public and keep them informed about the work of the Corps of Engineers".

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Back view of Ecole Bilingue in New Orleans. (USACE photo)

### ***Corps' RFOs Provide Temporary Structures For Schools & Public Offices***

**A**n important part of the Corps of Engineers' hurricane assistance is the work of the Regional Field Offices (RFO) in Louisiana and Mississippi. The RFO's, along with many other duties, are responsible for the construction of temporary structures which provide space mostly for schools, but also for city halls, courtrooms, and other needed public meeting spaces that were damaged or destroyed by Hurricane Katrina.

The Corps of Engineers to date (July 9) has completed 726 of 726 temporary public structures in Mississippi, and 280 of an anticipated 310 structures in Louisiana.



Ramp walkway (top) and classroom (right) at Ecole Bilingue in New Orleans. (USACE photos)





## *Faces of Hope*

### CREWS AT 17<sup>TH</sup> STREET CANAL WORKING AROUND THE CLOCK

#### ***“Duke” Ducarpe and Crews Determined To Finish Pump Installation***

I was getting ready to go on vacation when Katrina hit,” said “Duke” Ducarpe. “Instead, my family and I evacuated with everyone else.”

Maurice “Duke” Ducarpe is the on-site Project Representative for the Corps of Engineers at the 17<sup>th</sup> Street Canal project. And it will probably be a while before Ducarpe and his family get to go on that vacation.

Ducarpe’s job at the 17<sup>th</sup> Street Canal is to represent the Corps’ interests with all the Corps employees and contractors on that project. Anyone following the hurricane repair and construction work in Louisiana knows that there is a lot going on at the 17<sup>th</sup> Street Canal.

When Hurricane Katrina surged into Lake Pontchartrain last August, it caused a large breach in the levee wall at the 17<sup>th</sup> Street Canal. Ducarpe, a 10-year employee of the Corps of Engineers in New Orleans, was on site shortly afterward working to stabilize the breach.

“It was crazy around here at that time,” said Ducarpe. “We used every helicopter we could find to drop sandbags in the breached area,” he explained. “They were from the Coast Guard, the Army, and some private company helicopters too.”

Barges came up through Lake Pontchartrain to the 17<sup>th</sup> Street Canal with rocks and rip rap. Trucks picked up the load then dumped it along the levee wall to



**Maurice “Duke” Ducarpe represents the Corps of Engineers at the 17th Street Canal. Workers in the background are busy welding newly arrived pumps. Boh Brothers is the contractor on site.**

make a road to the breached area. Everything was going fine for Ducarpe and his crews, then Hurricane Rita came along.

When the second hurricane approached the area, Ducarpe and his crews were ready. “We drove temporary steel sheet piles across the 17<sup>th</sup> Street Canal bridge,” he said, “to keep any lake surge from coming up the canal.” And it worked.

“All of our work at that time was on TV around the world,” Ducarpe said. “In fact, everything we’re doing here is still on TV.” Ducarpe is referring to the webcam\* focused on the 17<sup>th</sup> Street Canal construction. It transmits an image on the internet that is updated every three minutes.

“And I know people are watching that webcam,” he said, “because I have people come through here every day from all over the world

saying they are following our work on TV. People from Europe, China, Japan, and all over the United States: news people, engineering groups and university groups.”

Ducarpe and his crews of some 60 people have been working 24 hours a day in two 12-hour shifts since September. About 45 people work the day shift, and about 15 people at night. “There are some things that we just can’t do under lights,” explained Ducarpe, “but we do all that we can – we work around the clock.”

“Our main focus right now,” said Ducarpe, “is the installation of temporary pumps – we’re trying to get these on line as soon as possible.” Pumps are being installed at the canal gates to pump water out of the canal if it becomes necessary to close the gates.

The temporary pumps, as they are

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*Ducarpe, continued from page 3*

called, will be in place until the permanent pumps and gates are designed, built and installed by the year 2010.

Temporary pumps are installed one at a time as they arrive from the manufacturer. As each pump is put in place, pumping capacity is increased.

“However,” added Ducarpe, “the emergency gates and pumps are ready right now. The city is protected from a major hurricane surge at the 17<sup>th</sup> Street Canal, and we’re upgrading our pumping capacity every day.”

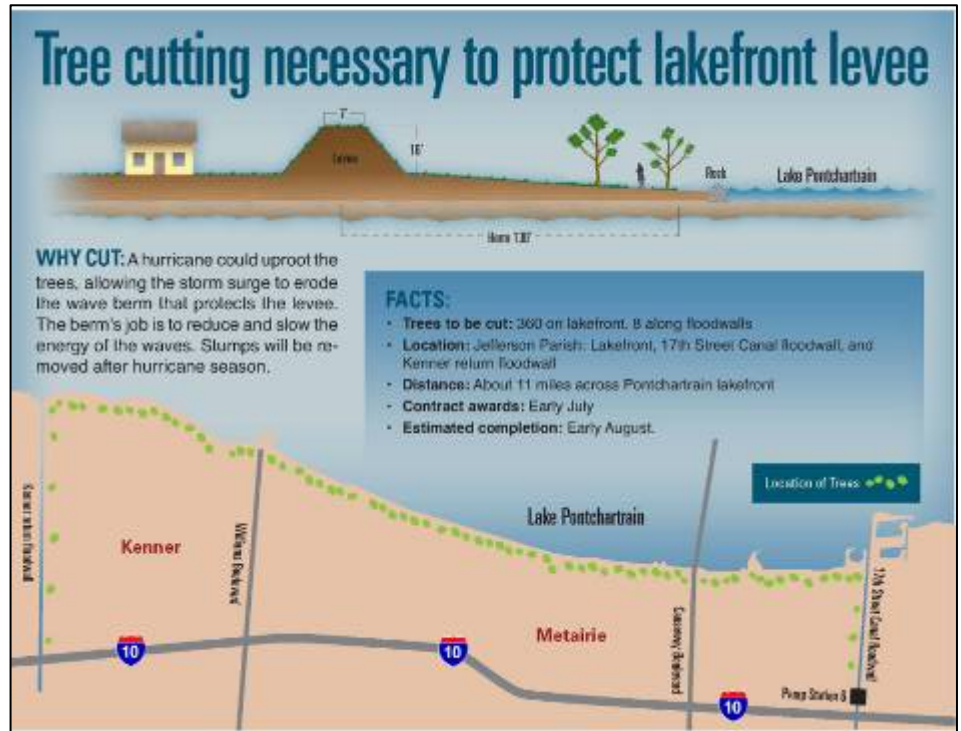
Ducarpe looked out the window of his construction trailer as workers busily went about their business and said, “the contractor has given us their best people and their best effort here.”

“These people are doing a super job.” 

*\*to view the webcam, go to [www.wvtv.com/floodgates/17thstreet.htm](http://www.wvtv.com/floodgates/17thstreet.htm)*

## Hurricane Protection: Lakefront trees will be cut

### *East Jefferson project necessary to protect levee’s first line of defense: the wave berm*



The Corps of Engineers released this illustration recently to demonstrate the need to cut 368 trees at the lakefront that are impeding the integrity of the levees there. For more information, go to [www.mnv.usace.army.mil](http://www.mnv.usace.army.mil).

### Points of Contact for Information

Topic	Phone	Organization
Overall information about work being performed by the Corps of Engineers in the New Orleans District	(504) 862-2201	New Orleans District Public Affairs
Overall Task Force Hope Information To be included on the Newsletter e-mail list	(504) 862-1836	Task Force Hope Public Affairs
Debris Removal in Louisiana	(225) 218-9325	Louisiana Recovery Field Office
Debris Removal in Mississippi	(601) 631-5065	Mississippi Recovery Field Office

The **Status Report Newsletter** supports the information program for Task Force Hope and its stakeholders. It also serves as one of the Task Force Hope’s primary communication tools for accurately transmitting the work of Task Force Hope, Hurricane Protection Office and the Recovery Field Offices in Louisiana and Mississippi to the Gulf Coast community and its citizens. This is an online publication and open to public distribution. This issue and past issues can be found at: [www.mvd.usace.army.mil/hurricane](http://www.mvd.usace.army.mil/hurricane). Comments and questions may be sent to the Status Report Newsletter editor at: [b2fwdpao@usace.army.mil](mailto:b2fwdpao@usace.army.mil).

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