



**US Army Corps
of Engineers**

New Orleans District

News Release

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Task Force Guardian

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Jan. 30, 2006

Outfall canal contracts awarded for interim gated closures, temporary pumps

NEW ORLEANS – The Army Corps of Engineers awarded contracts for construction of interim gated closure structures at the 17th Street and London Avenue outfall canals Jan. 27. The Corps also awarded a contract for 34 large temporary pumps to remove storm water from the canals when the interim gates are closed. They will award a contract for the interim gated closure structure at the Orleans Avenue canal in a few days.

The Corps plans to complete construction of the interim structures at all three canals by June 1, 2006, in time for the start of the hurricane season.

The interim structures will prevent storm surge from entering the canals and breaching the levees as happened during Hurricane Katrina. They will remain open unless a storm surge in Lake Pontchartrain threatens the canals. Each interim structure will rise 16.5 feet above sea level; that matches the height of the hurricane protection levees at the lakefront. (*See graphic*)

“We’ve been working with the City of New Orleans and Jefferson Parish over the last several weeks to find a way to increase hurricane protection along the outfall canals before June,” said Col. Lewis Setliff, III, the commander of the Corps’ Task Force Guardian, the group responsible for restoring the damaged hurricane protection system.

“The people who live behind these levees need to have confidence in their hurricane protection system. Preventing storm surges from entering the canals is the most prudent course of action right now,” he said. “We know that the interim gated closure structures will do that. While we’re still analyzing exactly why the levees failed, the interim structures are a significant step to restoring protection before the next hurricane season.

“We will only close the gates on the interim closure structures if we’re faced with a hurricane storm surge that threatens to enter the canals. We may never close the gates,” Setliff added. Had the gates been in place over the last 70 years, they would have closed only a few times.

The Corps of Engineers will operate and maintain the gates and pumps, and will coordinate the operation closely with the City of New Orleans and Jefferson Parish.

Contract award information:

- 17th Street Canal, Interim Gated Closure Structure
Boh Bro, Construction Co.
New Orleans, Louisiana
\$27,806,500

- London Avenue Canal, Interim Gated Closure Structure
M.R. Pittman Group
Harahan, Louisiana
\$25,504,250
- Temporary Pumps
MWI Corporation
Deerfield Beach, Florida
\$26,606,383

