

NEWS RELEASE

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
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Inundation cut from 80 to 40 percent **Corps marks halfway point in unwatering mission**

NEW ORLEANS, LA. – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers progresses in draining water from the New Orleans metro area, but warns local citizens that flooded areas may not be habitable for a long while.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is working with local, state and other federal agencies to develop plans that balance residents' desire to get back into their homes with health and safety concerns. The Corps' primary focus remains on unwatering the metro area.

The mission of unwatering New Orleans and the surrounding affected parishes is moving smoothly, said Maj. George Stejic, deputy of Task Force Unwatering, Corps of Engineers. Stejic estimates less than 40 percent of water remains in the metro area.

“In Orleans Parish, flood water levels have fallen precipitously with most of the Ninth Ward and the southern part of Orleans Parish dry enough for normal recovery operations to begin,” he said.

Water remains in the northern part of the parish and is going to be pumped out using Pump Stations 12 and 4, and reinforced with about a dozen temporary pumps, he said. As floodwaters recede, some ponds will remain and will be drained using portable pumps.

Project Team Leader Stuart Waits, New Orleans District, estimated that pumping efforts in the lower Ninth Ward were removing 12 million gallons of water a day. Corps personnel from the New Orleans, Little Rock and Tulsa districts, contracted pump, drainage and electrical experts, and German and Dutch pump teams continue to work with local Water and Sewage Board officials.

Some construction work continues on the 17th Street and London Avenue canal breaches where helicopters are precision-placing 7,000-pound sandbags to reinforce existing repairs and crews are armoring sandbag closures with rock. The Corps is monitoring the floodwalls around the clock and conducting hydro and over-bank surveying. Contractors are also maintaining cranes at the sites to regulate flow levels by adjusting sheet pile walls at the mouths of the canals into Lake Pontchartrain. Construction of the access road to the second London Canal breach north of Mirabeau bridge was completed Sept. 14.

St. Bernard's Parish is almost completely dry, Stejic said, with the only significant water remaining in the Chalmette extension. However, recovery in St. Bernard's Parish is limited by the spill of petroleum products from local oil facilities.

In Plaquemines Parish, repairs to the levee breaches continue and the conditions for full scale pumping of the affected areas will soon be set. Most of the fixed pumping stations in Plaquemines Parish have survived the storm and will be available to un-water the parish.

A team of five Dutch experts from the Directorate General for Public Works and Water Management (Rijkswaterstaat) and three mobile water pumps have been in Plaquemines Parish, establishing mobile pump stations there. The Directorate General for Public Works and Water Management is responsible for managing the water table in the Netherlands. The Dutch team has also offered assistance in fixing damaged pumps. The pumps can expel 3,000 cubic meters of water an hour and each pump can run for 48 hours continuously on one tank of diesel fuel. Dutch water pumps have been used with great success in several countries including Suriname, Poland, and the Netherlands.

Task Force Unwatering shifted pump repair priorities from Pump Station 1, which is now operating, to Pump Station 4 in Orleans Parish. (See Pump Station Rehabilitation chart.) The number of pumps that are operational at any given time is continually changing. For example, today 7.5 billion gallons of water were pumped out of the city. That's down from yesterday's estimate of 11.8 billion gallons because one of the main pumping stations is running out of water to pump and most pumps in St. Bernard's Parish are off because of successful mission completion. As of today, Task Force Unwatering estimates the overall effort will be completed in early October.

From a ground survey conducted by TF Unwatering project managers, the Corps has identified nine breaches that must be repaired to provide a minimum level of protection to the affected parishes. Of these, seven have been repaired to date, one is being used to allow drainage to leave St. Bernard's Parish and one is being addressed in Plaquemines Parish. Additionally, levees were deliberately notched at two sites in St. Bernard's Parish to facilitate the unwatering mission. Of these, one has been closed and one is still in use. The Corps is actively making emergency closures of all breaches in a prioritized manner to improve the current protection.

- Breach on 17th Street canal in Orleans Parish. Repaired.
- Northern breach on London canal in Orleans Parish. Repaired.
- Southern breach on London canal in Orleans Parish. Repaired.
- Northern breach on the IHNC in Orleans Parish. Repaired.
- Southern breach on the IHNC in Orleans Parish. Repaired.
- Breach in St Bernard's Parish. Not repaired – water is flowing out naturally.
- Three breaches in Plaquemines Parish. Two repaired.

On the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal, Corps contractors used crane barges to remove two barges from “atop” the Florida Avenue Bridge, also commonly known as the L&N Bridge.

Pumps

As of Sept. 15, 2005

<i>Parish</i>	<i>Station</i>	<i>Current CFS</i>	<i>Capable CFS</i>	<i>Working Pumps</i>	<i>Total Pumps</i>	
East Jefferson						
Orleans	1	1,100	6,825	2	11	
	2	0	3,190	0	7	
	3	1,000	4,260	1	7	
	4	0	3,720	0	6	
	5	0	2,260	0	5	
	6	1,250	9,480	2	15	
	7	0	2,690	0	5	
	12	0	1,000	0	1	
	19	2,100	3,650	2	5	
	I-10	610	860	3	4	
	<i>Permanent Pump Totals:</i>		<i>6,060</i>	<i>37,935</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>66</i>
	Misc. Orleans W	60	60	1	1	
	Misc. Orleans N	0	300	0	3	
	Germans	100	100	15	15	
	Arkansas	100	100	10	10	
	<i>Temporary Pump Totals:</i>		<i>260</i>	<i>560</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>29</i>
<i>Orleans Parish Totals:</i>		<i>6,320</i>	<i>38,495</i>	<i>36</i>	<i>95</i>	
East Orleans	10 (Citrus)	0	1,000	0	4	
	14 (Jahncke)	1,200	1,200	3	4	
	15	500	750	2	3	
	16 (St. Charles)	0	1,000	0	4	
	<i>Permanent Pump Totals:</i>		<i>1,700</i>	<i>3,950</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>15</i>
	East Orleans W	450	450	10	10	
	East Orleans SE 1	100	200	2	4	
	East Orleans SE 2	200	400	2	4	
	<i>Temporary Pump Totals:</i>		<i>750</i>	<i>1,050</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>18</i>
	<i>East Orleans Parish Totals:</i>		<i>2,450</i>	<i>5,000</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>33</i>
St. Bernard	1 (Fortification) & 6 (Jean Laffite)	0	2,227	0	6	
	2 (Guichard)	0	578	0	2	
	3 (Bayou Villere)	0	500	0	2	

7 (Bayou Ducros)	0	1,000	0	3
4 (Meraux)	0	1,227	0	4
5 (E.J. Gore)	0	660	0	3
8 (St. Mary)	560	840	2	3
<i>Permanent Pump Totals:</i>	<i>560</i>	<i>7,032</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>23</i>
St. Bernard Parish Totals:	560	7,032	2	23

Permanent Pump Totals:	8,320	48,917	17	104
Temporary Pump Totals:	1,010	1,610	40	47
Total:	9,330	50,527	57	151

Plaquemines	Belair		130		
	Belle Chasse 1		3,500		
	Belle Chasse 2		990		
	Bellevue	516	516	1	1
	Braithwaite	100	100	3	3
	Diamond	256	256	1	1
	Duvic (Venice)	560	560	1	1
	Gainard Woods	0	408	0	1
	Grand Lizard (Buras)	0	840	0	1
	Hayes	500	500	1	1
	Lower Ollie		120		
	Ollie 2		300		
	Pointe A La Hache-Eastbank	0	516	0	1
	Pointe A La Hache-West	516	516	1	1
	Scarsdale	1,780	1,780		
	Sunrise 1	0	200	0	1
	Sunrise 2	0	290	0	1
	Buras-Triumph		840		
	Upper Ollie		250		
	<i>Permanent Pump Totals:</i>	<i>4,228</i>	<i>12,612</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>13</i>
Dutch		100	100	3	3
	<i>Temporary Pump Totals:</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>3</i>
	Plaquemines Parish Totals:	4,328	12,712	11	16

