



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers**  
St. Louis District®

# News Release

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## **Mississippi River Locks 27 Main Chamber to Close in July for Emergency Repairs**

Granite City, Ill. – The 1,200-foot-long main chamber at Locks 27 at the south end of the Chain of Rocks Canal, near Granite City will have to be closed for emergency repairs the Corps of Engineers has announced. The closure is currently scheduled as soon as possible, to start on July 12 and be completed on July 25.

The closure is to replace tensioning rods that are part of the diagonal braces on the downstream lock gates, known as miter gates because of the way they are designed to operate.

Corps officials note that the current deterioration makes possible a failure of the supporting diagonals, which would make the lock chamber unusable until it could be repaired.

Repairs are slated to begin at 6 a.m., Monday, July 12. The main chamber, some 1,200-foot long will have to be dewatered for the procedure. Work will go ahead 12-hours per day seven days a week until it is finished. That is scheduled for 6 p.m., Sunday, July 25.

Corps and Coast Guard officials have informed the navigation industry of the pending closure through an official notice to mariners.

A similar situation recently emerged at the Corps' McAlpine Locks on the Ohio River at Louisville, Ky., where the lock will be closed for two weeks in August. However, Locks 27 here include an adjacent 600-foot chamber that will permit slower locking of 15-barge tows by separating them into two sections as is required further north at the District's 600-foot-long Locks 25 and 24.

Unlike those two locks at Winfield and Clarksville, Mo. respectively, the auxiliary chamber at Locks 27 does not have electric tow-haulage equipment to pull the first set of nine barges out of the chamber to enable the next "cut" to enter. Tows of this size – the maximum for operating on the upper Mississippi River through the system of locks – will have to arrange for the services of a pull or helper-boat. If the situation warrants, the navigation notice informs, the tow industry may have to implement a self-help arrangement, using waiting towboats to help pull barges from the lock.

Corps officials note that the scheduled dewatering and repairs may be delayed if necessary if water levels do not come down sufficiently to permit the work to be safely accomplished.

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**Editors Note:** *During the dewatering period the bottom and sidewalls of the nearly one-quarter-mile-long main chamber will be exposed to view and may be photographed or captured on video. Access can be arranged through the District's public affairs office.*