



News Release

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St. Louis Hosts Midwest Levee Conference

More than 300 levee experts representing a broad spectrum of specific interests in the nation's flood protection system infrastructure will gather in St. Louis next week for a Midwest Levee Conference. The conclave is being hosted by the Society of American Military Engineers, St. Louis Post and the American Society of Civil Engineers, St. Louis Section, with strong participation by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Louis District.

The conference, being held at the Hyatt Regency St. Louis Riverfront Hotel (formerly the Adam's Mark Hotel) at 315 Chestnut Street, begins Tuesday, June 3 at 8 a.m. and concludes June 5 with a Bi-State Regional Levee Summit hosted by the East-West Gateway Council of Governments. That final session will run from 10:15 a.m. to noon.

Conference attendees representing numerous architecture and engineering companies from around the region, levee district members and representatives from federal, state and local agencies will attend. A diverse conference agenda will address technology for flood protection design, methodology and operational practices, focus on recent issues such as FEMA map modernization, levee certification, and the overall condition of the nation's aging flood protection infrastructure.

The conference's theme is "Managing Flood Risk Together."

Since Hurricane Katrina there has been an increased interest in our nation's flood protection systems, conference sponsors explain. Levees and other system components, such as reservoirs, help reduce the risk of flooding but they do not eliminate it. It is important that there is accurate assessment of the nation's flood risk reduction system, that we ensure appropriate operation and maintenance practices are being followed and that risks are being appropriately communicated to the public.

The sponsors hope the event will spur a healthy dialog and maintain an emphasis on the important work ahead with levees and the protection they provide to people, businesses and critical infrastructure. They have stated their goal is to provide a forum to share lessons learned and to discuss the latest technologies related to managing our nation's flood risk. Conference attendees are being told that everyone has a role to play: governmental agencies, engineering and construction firms, levee boards and the American public.

The Midwest Levee Conference has been preceded by meetings to look at levee deficiencies on both sides of the Mississippi River, as well as on the lower reaches of the Missouri and Illinois Rivers. This event will broaden the perspective to the entire Midwestern region of the United States.

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LEVEE CONFERENCE/2-2-2

For more information about the conference or to view the agenda, visit the conference web site at: <http://www.midwestleveeconference.com>

Who: Architects and engineers, government officials, levee operators

What: Midwest Levee Conference

When: Tuesday, June 3 – Thursday, June 5

Where: Hyatt Regency St. Louis Riverfront Hotel (Former Adams Mark), 315 Chestnut Street, St. Louis

Why: To focus attention on the Midwest's levees and their role in reducing flood risks

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