



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

# News Release

Release No. 49-08

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For Release: **IMMEDIATE**

Date: July 27, 2008

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## Corps at Mark Twain Lake issues caution for Salt River area below lake

Mark Twain Lake – July 27, 2008 - The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at Mark Twain Lake is cautioning citizens, especially those below the lake's Clarence Cannon Dam that precipitation during recent days has pushed elevations at the lake to above-record levels. As a result, discharges from the dam are currently at 12,000 cubic feet per second (about 90,000 cubic gallons per second.)

Corps officials add that any additional rain, certainly over coming weeks will require high discharges which could cause areas in the Salt River Valley below the dam to be flooded. Higher inflows would require commensurately higher discharges, flooding larger areas.

The Corps of Engineers is working closely with local emergency providers to ensure that everyone has accurate information about possible threats, including providing them with maps of areas that would be flooded at a series of increased discharges.

Local officials are informing citizens in potentially threatened areas. They will make recommendations and decisions about evacuations should they become necessary.

Mark Twain Lake Operation Manager Sandra Spence says that public safety is her number one goal in making this announcement. "We don't want to panic anyone, but we do want to urge caution and prudent measures immediately. The lake is very high already – some 31 feet above the desired summer elevation. We want people to have our best estimates to help them make decisions about their personal safety and property. We may be only one heavy rain fall from flooding downstream," she added.

The Corps of Engineers at Mark Twain Lake is starting to take measures to protect high value property, including the Clarence Cannon Power House and its turbine hydropower generators. The Corps is also cooperating with Northeast Power Cooperative officials to protect their equipment at the site.

These precautions are including sand bagging and building earthen berms around facilities. Corps officials emphasize that these measures are specifically to protect the equipment at the sites and are not indications of any danger to or from the dam. "The dam is being monitored by dam safety engineers from our St. Louis headquarters around the clock and they inform us it is performing superbly," Spence emphasized.

While the major potential danger is to individuals downstream of the lake, officials indicate that upstream areas in Monroe and Shelby Counties may also be impacted by heavy rain and localized flooding, which may cause roads to be under water at higher elevations.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers places public safety at the top of its priorities and urges citizens to exercise all prudent precautions. These include:

- Have an evacuation plan: know how you would depart, plan on what important items or documents you would take with you (insurance policies, birth certificates, records, etc.)
- Inform relatives and friends of your actions and where you will go.
- Remove valuable property to a safe location.
- Secure utilities properly.
- Don't leave pets behind.
- Listen to and follow instructions of your local emergency operations center and local emergency officials.
- If you have any doubt about your situation, take prudent action and don't wait.

Corps officials urge citizens to monitor media for latest reports and to follow advice of local officials. As one mayor noted, “We’d rather take calls from people who are returning to dry houses than have anyone endangered or lose valuable property.”

Follow up news releases will be issued and Mark Twain Lake officials are determining when and where to hold a public meeting as soon as possible. “This situation will be ongoing. We are at record levels due to record rains,” Lake Manager Sandra Spence said. It may be sometime before we are able to bring the lake down to an acceptable level for everyone’s maximum safety,” she concluded.

To check daily lake levels go to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Louis District, River & Reservoir Daily Report on the web at <http://mvs-wc.mvs.usace.army.mil/dresriv.html> . To inquire about conditions at your favorite lake location or other facilities, services or special events contact the Mark Twain Lake Project Office at (573) 735-4097, email [MarkTwainInfo@usace.army.mil](mailto:MarkTwainInfo@usace.army.mil) or stop at the office located north of Cannon Dam. The office is taking calls 24 hours a day to provide access to updated lake conditions.