



Parish of Ascension

OFFICE OF THE PARISH PRESIDENT

TOMMY MARTINEZ
Parish President

Pontchartrain Levee District Executive Director Issues Safety Warnings

Contact: Lester Kenyon (225) 621-5753; E-mail: lkenyon@apgov.us
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 9, 2011

GONZALES – The following letter was issued by Pontchartrain Levee District Executive Director Monica T. Salins on Saturday, May 7, 2011:

As I'm sure you are all aware, the Pontchartrain Levee District (PLD) has been monitoring the Mississippi River Levee (MRL) for the past several weeks due to the current high water river elevations throughout our District.

PLD is comprised of 115 miles on the east bank of the Mississippi River Levee which includes portions of six (6) parishes, namely, East Baton Rouge, Iberville, Ascension, St. James, St. John the Baptist and St. Charles.

I am asking for cooperation and assistance from all of you regarding the respect of this levee system. As of this date and time, the Mississippi River is at 15.53' on the Carrollton gage. Therefore, the following applies:

- PUBLIC SAFETY IS PRIORITY-- PLEASE REFRAIN FROM PARKING OR UNAUTHORIZED MOTOR VEHICLE ACCESS. THERE IS ZERO TOLERANCE DURING THIS STATE OF EMERGENCY AND ALL LOCAL SHERIFF AND POLICE DEPARTMENTS ARE ASSISTING WITH THIS EFFORT TO INSURE THE SAFETY OF THE RESIDENTS AND MAINTAIN THE STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY OF THIS SYSTEM;

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- NO ACTIVITY AND/OR SUBSURFACE WORK OF ANY KIND IS ALLOWED WITHIN 1500' OF THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER LEVEE CENTERLINE ONCE THE CARROLTON GAGE REACHED 15';
- SUBSURFACE INCLUDES BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO- NO PILE DRIVING, NO DIGGING, NO EXCAVATION, NO TRENCHING....NO SUBSURFACE WORK OF ANY KIND WITHIN 1500' OF THE MAINLINE MISSISSIPPI RIVER LEVEES (let your Planning and Zoning Departments as well as Public Works know this);
- NO WAIVERS FOR PREVIOUSLY APPROVED PERMITS WILL BE CONSIDERED DURING THIS TIME OF EMERGENCY;
- INSPECTION TEAMS FROM USACE, GOHSEP, OCPR AND PLD ARE MONITORING THE ENTIRE LEVEE SYSTEM 7 DAYS A WEEK IN ORDER TO CARRY OUT THE NECESSARY ASSESSMENTS OF THIS SYSTEM AND RESPOND APPROPRIATELY, IF NEEDED;
- **SPECIFIC TO INDUSTRY: ANY MODIFICATIONS/ADD ONS/EMERGENCY MODIFICATIONS/EMERGENCY PREPARATIONS REQUIRE APPROVAL FROM VARIOUS AGENCIES, PLD BEING THE AGENCY TO CIRCULATE SAID APPROVAL.** That means that anything that is to be stored, altered, etc. within 1500' of the mainline Mississippi River levee centerline IS TO BE SUBMITTED IN WRITING, VERY DETAILED WITH ATTACHED DRAWINGS, and submitted to: Amy.E.Powell@usace.army.mil, Karen.l.oberlies@usace.army.mil, msalinspld@bellsouth.net, jhendersonpld@bellsouth.net, billy.wall@la.gov and Ronnie.L.Robinson@la.gov. Again, PLD will issue the FINAL Emergency approval VIA EMAIL once ALL of the other agencies have submitted their approval and/or any specific provisions.

Please feel free to visit the USACE, New Orleans District website at <http://www.usace.army.mil> for any and all updated information regarding the “2011 Flood Fight.”

The gage readings throughout the New Orleans District can be obtained at www.Rivergages.com (Choose the Water Levels By: “New Orleans District” and then from New Orleans District Basins: “Mississippi River & Passes.” These gage readings are updated approximately every 3-4 hours but it’s an actual “real time” reference).

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As you are all aware, the Bonnet Carre' Spillway will open on Monday, May 9th, 2011 beginning at approximately at 8:00 a.m. Media and the general public are allowed to view the opening at the Bonnet Carre' Spillway Project Office, located at 16302 River Road in Norco, Louisiana. As always, I will keep you updated as information is available and provided to this office.

Monica T. Salins,
Executive Director
Pontchartrain Levee District

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