

Changes Underway for Local Drainage and Levee District

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EDWARDSVILLE — Operational changes are underway within Metro East Sanitary District, which will continue to reduce the risk from flood events.

Chairman Kurt Prenzler said that on Wednesday the Chouteau, Nameoki, and Venice (CNV) Drainage and Levee District voted to dissolve its district and transfer its property to MESD.

“This is a good thing,” Prenzler said. “The district was no longer assessing taxpayers for drainage services since it annexed into MESD in July 2011.”

The CNV District Board, which also controls the Long Lake Drainage and Levee Sub-District, will need final approval from a Madison County Court judge before its dissolution. The county chairman appoints the CNV District Board members.

“This is in the best interest of taxpayers,” Prenzler said. “The district has no outstanding debt and for years MESD provided drainage services. Most of the area within the district is farmland.”

The Local Government Property Transfer Act allows for the CNV District to transfer all assets and real property to MESD for dissolution. MESD will acquire the district’s pump station, which is south of the Chain of Rocks Bridge, 23 parcels of land and approximately \$6,000.

Don Sawicki, a CNV District board member, said the improved operations of MESD helped to make the decision easier in dissolving the district.

“CNV District does not have the resources to properly manage pumping and drainage,” Sawicki said. “MESD is able to handle the additional assets thanks to the new operational practices.”

Prenzler also praised the changes that have taken place within MESD operations. He said fewer properties are under water than in years past.

“We can’t control the weather, but we have been able to control other factors to prevent flooding,” Prenzler said.

MESD focused on the need to increase capacity of water runoff flowing into Horseshoe and Long Lakes during storms.

Stephen Adler, executive director of MESD, said surface runoff was the No. 1 reason for flooding within the American Bottoms.

“Horseshoe Lake was too high and couldn’t hold the surface runoff,” he said.

Surface flooding is caused when water sits in the canals and ditches before it drains into the lakes, which is the retention area that absorbs the influx of storm water.

Adler said lowering Horseshoe Lake during the spring storm season has prevented much of the flooding. The water level at Horseshoe Lake was at 402.8 feet above sea level on Thursday, a foot under normal level of 404 feet.

“Improving the flow of water is important in the prevention of flooding,” Prenzler said. “Whether it’s drainage or pumping the water out it’s all about keeping the residents safe and dry.”