

Corps of Engineers Crews Welcome Ice Departure, Last Week Was Difficult With Low Temps

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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ALTON - U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Hydraulic Engineer Russell Errett, who works in the Water Management Office, said today, broken ice on the Mississippi River doesn't automatically correlate to waters that result in flood stages.

Errett acknowledged he had not witnessed ice that formed on the Mississippi River near the Melvin Price Lock and Dam this past week with low temps in several years.

Errett said when ice spans across the Mississippi River channel, it creates many headaches for Lock and Dam personnel and navigators who move through the Lock and Dam.

He said traffic moves through St. Louis 365 days a year because the Mississippi River carries materials year-round with nearby refineries and other businesses that move goods.

Errett explained when ice moves through the Lock and Dam, it has to be cleared constantly for proper navigation to occur. He also added that sometimes ice accumulates on the front of a barge and will refreeze, and that diminishes the depth the water vessel can move along the river.

“Usually when we have this much ice, the ice turns to rain on top of it, but this year it looks like we will have a breather. It is nice to keep the ice flowing and see some warm weather.”

The hydraulic engineer didn't want to speculate on any flood predictions, but said the Great Flood of 1993 and other heavy floods most of the time resulted from heavy rains that began in the spring and flowed into the summer.

[Chris Rhodes also contributed to this story.](#)