

Area cities prepare for any possible flooding, hope for best

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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The City of Alton, Grafton, Hardin and Kampsville are no strangers to high water levels and know when to activate to protect the communities.

So far, the communities are holding up under a lot of rain from flooding issues and there is hope these areas may avoid problems in the next few days.

Grafton Police Chief Chris Sullivan is the coordinator for that community in regard to flooding and he is cautiously optimistic the community will dodge the bullet of serious flooding.

“The latest NOAA-issued forecast showed Grafton at 26.5 feet on Monday morning and that does put water on Route 100,” he said. “We may have to have a flood route open then. This is a very fluid situation. We are making plans for the worst and best case scenario and hoping for the best,” Sullivan said.

Water level stats from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration are:

Grafton today at 1 p.m. was at 23.4 feet with 21.0 flood stage. Grafton is projected to be 26.4 feet by Monday not accounting for any rain. Rainfall is predicted Friday through Sunday. The flood stage at Grafton is 18 feet. Alton, at Mel Price Lock and Dam, was 27.3 feet at 1 p.m. today and projected to be 30.0 feet by Monday. The flood stage in Alton is 21.0 feet. Both Grafton and Alton are towns on the banks of the Mississippi River.

Hardin in Calhoun County, on the Illinois River, today is at 29.38 feet and projected to be 32 feet by Monday.

Alton looks like it will end up OK in regard to any flooding issues, Mayor Brant Walker’s chief of staff Dan Herkert said Thursday afternoon.

“We were in a meeting with Fire Chief Bernie Sebold and Greg Caffey, (Director of Development and Housing), and they said we will be right at the point of problems downtown and at Riverfront Park, but it seems like we will dodge the bullet,” Herkert said. “We are tracking the Corps of Engineers and the National Weather Service hourly and taking precautionary measures. We will wait and see what happens.”

Within the next 24 hours, several additional roadways including Illinois 100 in Grafton may be impacted, both Joe Monroe and Craig Poettker of IDOT said.

"The Illinois Department of Transportation will continue monitoring State roadways in the Counties of Calhoun, Greene, Jersey, Madison, and Randolph throughout the week," Monroe said. "Flooding may require closure of State Highways and Ferries along the Illinois and Mississippi Rivers. Over the next several days, we will provide updates, as warranted, when developments occur. No major road closures have yet been announced in the region."

Traffic control devices and directional signage, including dynamic message boards, have been deployed to guide motorists safely around major closures. Travelers are advised to

consider alternate routes or allow additional time to travel known flood prone areas. Regardless, all motorists are urged to be patient, reduce speed and exercise added caution throughout the Metro East region – as traffic patterns and travel times will likely be affected.

Since this is a very dynamic situation, please see the Department's website, www.idot.il.gov, for the latest information on roadway closures throughout Illinois. Detailed information on the Metro East is also available at www.stl-traffic.org/.

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