

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **Ohio River Levels Rising *MSD Activating Flood Operations at the Mill Creek Barrier Dam***

Cincinnati, OH – Due to rising water levels in the Ohio River, the Metropolitan Sewer District of Greater Cincinnati (MSD) and the City of Cincinnati's Stormwater Management Utility (SMU) are activating flood operations at the Mill Creek Barrier Dam today to protect the Mill Creek valley from flooding.

As of 10 a.m. this morning, the Ohio River was at 49.6 feet. Flood stage is 52 feet. The Cincinnati area is under a flood advisory until Wednesday morning, April 15, 2015. River level readings can be found at the National Weather Service's Ohio River Forecast Center website at [www.weather.gov/ohrfc/](http://www.weather.gov/ohrfc/).

The dam will be in operation until water levels recede. At this time, we do not anticipate the need to install flood gates due to the projected river levels.

#### **Background**

SMU is responsible for managing the barrier dam, a 1.5 mile-long floodwall and up to 14 floodgates during high water conditions in the Ohio River. MSD and SMU crews operate and maintain the system, which was constructed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in 1948 to prevent rising water in the Ohio River and Mill Creek tributaries from causing local flooding in the Mill Creek valley.

During normal conditions on the Ohio River, the Mill Creek flows into the Ohio River through an opening in the barrier dam. When the Ohio River approaches flood stage, the opening is closed off using up to 14 metal bulkheads weighing 11,000 pounds apiece, put in place by a large crane. One or more of a total of eight large pumps inside the dam are then used to keep the creek at a safe level by pumping the flow through to the Ohio River. The floodwall extends east from the barrier dam along Mehring Way to Linn Street. If needed, up to 14 floodgates can be installed at various street or rail line openings in the floodwall to prevent flooding of the valley.

The barrier dam is put into service when the Ohio River is predicted to reach flood stage of 52 feet. Normal Ohio River pool elevation is about 26 feet. The barrier dam system was built to protect against the 1937 flood level of 80 feet.

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For more information about stormwater management, please visit [http://www.msdc.org/about\\_msdc/stormwater/index.html](http://www.msdc.org/about_msdc/stormwater/index.html) or contact SMU during normal business hours at (513) 352-4287.

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