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NEWS RELEASE

March 25, 2011 – For Immediate Release

Flood Preparations Continue in Dubuque

DUBUQUE, Iowa – The City of Dubuque is closely monitoring Mississippi River flood predictions as preparations continue for the river's crest and potential flooding.

A task force of City staff from numerous departments is meeting weekly to review flood mitigation efforts and emergency plans related to City services and assets. The task force has also begun meeting with local utility providers and railroad operators to coordinate efforts.

Dubuque property owners are reminded that they are responsible for protecting their property in the event of flooding. The City's efforts will focus on the protection of critical public assets and the operation of essential community services. The City does not plan to provide sandbags or other resources to owners of private properties that may be impacted by flooding.

The river is expected to reach flood stage (17 feet) around Friday, April 1. The National Weather Service's (NWS) most recent Probabilistic Flood Outlook, issued on March 25, shows a 50 percent chance of the river reaching 23.9 feet, which would be similar to the flood of 2001. The outlook also indicates a 10 percent chance of the river reaching 28.2 feet in the next 3 months. The record crest for Dubuque occurred in 1965 when it reached 26.8 feet.

The City Engineering Department verified elevations along Dubuque's 6.5-mile flood wall over the last few weeks and determined its lowest point is 33 feet. However, several City facilities are located on the river side of the flood wall and are not protected by it, including the Mystique Ice Arena (elevation = 29.5 feet), Miller Riverview Park and Campground, A.Y. McDonald Park, and the Water Pollution Control Plant. The Water Pollution Control Plant is well above projected flood levels but two of its lift stations could be impacted. The City's

Water Treatment Plant on Hawthorne Street is protected by the flood wall, but several of the plant's well heads in A.Y. McDonald Park would be affected if the river exceeds 25 feet. The City has several other well heads and water service is not expected to be affected.

The City Council has authorized the purchase of almost 10,000 feet of flood barriers to protect the ice arena, sanitary sewer lift stations, and well heads. The barriers have been ordered and the barriers will start arriving early next week. City staff is also in communication with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers regarding possible assistance and resources. As a result, the City is purchasing 20,000 sand bags for flood wall operations and has requested 100,000 sandbags from the Corps' warehouse to protect the City assets in case all of the flood barriers do not arrive in time. The City has also purchased a sandbag-filling machine which, when attached to one of the City's John Deere skid steer loaders, fills 12 sand bags at a time in a matter of a few seconds.

Dubuque's flood wall, the John C. Culver Flood Wall, is inspected twice annually; once by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the City's Public Works Department and once by the City's Public Works Department only, which oversees flood wall operations. The City performs required maintenance on the flood wall every year, including repair of rip-rap sections, removal of vegetation, and repair of damage caused by rodent burrows. In recent years, the City replaced the Ice Harbor's pumps and installed backup generators at each of the four pumping stations along the flood wall.

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