

## FLOOD EDITION

May 5, 2010

**A daily roundup of recent news stories and opinion pieces about Tennessee transportation, water and flood control infrastructure**

For the full story, click the headline or use the link.

**[Gallery: Nashville Flood Photos \(WPLN\) http://wpln.org/?p=17055](http://wpln.org/?p=17055)**

**[Nashville Waters Receding; Crews Search For Bodies \(Mercurynews.Com\) Extensive Photography](http://www.mercurynews.com/breaking-news/ci_15012815?nclick_check=1)**

The Cumberland River finally began receding Tuesday, exposing mud-caked homes and submerged cars as officials searched door to door for more victims of a record-busting flash flood and weekend storm already blamed for nearly 30 deaths. No new fatalities were reported Tuesday and it was unclear whether anyone remained missing. The weekend deluge swept many motorists to their deaths even after forecasters and Nashville's mayor warned people not to drive. But staying put carried frightening consequences for others as the swollen Cumberland and its tributaries started pouring into thousands of homes.

[http://www.mercurynews.com/breaking-news/ci\\_15012815?nclick\\_check=1](http://www.mercurynews.com/breaking-news/ci_15012815?nclick_check=1)

**[Coast Guard Closing Portion of the Tennessee River \(Daily News Journal | DNJ.com\)](http://www.dnj.com/article/20100505/NEWS01/100504056/Tennessee-River-closed-to-boaters)**

The U.S. Coast Guard said that no recreational vessels are allowed from the mouth of the Tennessee to Pickwick Landing, Tenn., a stretch of 206 miles.

<http://www.dnj.com/article/20100505/NEWS01/100504056/Tennessee-River-closed-to-boaters>

**[River Begins to Recede in Tennessee \(New York Times\)](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/05/05/us/05flood.html)**

The rain-swollen Cumberland River began to recede on Tuesday after flooding parts of Nashville and surrounding communities with torrents of muddy water. Downtown businesses and landmarks were shuttered because of power failures caused by the flood, but one of the city's two water treatment plants was narrowly spared and remained in service. Officials said they might not be able to get the power back on before Friday.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/05/05/us/05flood.html>

**[News Wrap: 22 Dead, Thousands Displaced by Flooding in Southeast U.S. \(PBS News Hour\) with Video](http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/weather/jan-june10/othernews_05-03.html)**

The death toll reached 22 today from weekend storms that hit Tennessee, Mississippi, and Kentucky. The worst was in Nashville, Tennessee, where more than a foot of rain sent the Cumberland River surging into the streets. The new day brought startling scenes of the heavy damage in Nashville. There was enough water in places to float an entire dumpster down a street. Portions of the historic downtown area were evacuated as the Cumberland River crested 11 feet above flood stage. Businesses were closed, and thousands of tourists took refuge in shelters. The deluge piled cars atop one another and carried some vehicles down submerged streets.

[http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/weather/jan-june10/othernews\\_05-03.html](http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/weather/jan-june10/othernews_05-03.html)

**[Obama Approves Disaster Declaration For 4 Counties \(Associated Press\)](http://content.usatoday.net/dist/custom/gci/InsidePage.aspx?cld=tennessean&sParam=3345261.story)**

President Barack Obama has authorized a major disaster declaration for Cheatham, Davidson, Hickman and Williamson counties. It makes federal funding available to individuals in the counties as a result of severe storms last weekend. According to a news release from the governor's office Tuesday, declarations for additional Tennessee counties are expected in coming days.

<http://content.usatoday.net/dist/custom/gci/InsidePage.aspx?cld=tennessean&sParam=3345261.story>

### **[Obama Declares 'Major Disaster' In Tenn. \(UPI\)](#)**

U.S. President Barack Obama Tuesday declared a major disaster area in four Tennessee counties devastated by flooding. The declaration requires federal resources to be deployed to Cheatham, Davidson, Hickman and Williamson counties to aid in the recovery from the severe floods and winds that have killed at least 29 people and wreaked havoc across the Tennessee and Ohio river valleys since April 30. Grants and loans to cover home repairs and temporary housing will be part of the federal assistance, the White House said in a statement. Gracia B. Szczech was named as the federal coordinating officer for recovery operations. Damage surveys and assessments are still under way, and more assistance will be allocated as necessary. Individuals and business owners can register for assistance at [DisasterAssistance.gov](http://DisasterAssistance.gov) or by calling 1-800-621-FEMA. [http://www.upi.com/Top\\_News/International/2010/05/05/Obama-declares-major-disaster-in-Tenn/UPI-14181273040269/](http://www.upi.com/Top_News/International/2010/05/05/Obama-declares-major-disaster-in-Tenn/UPI-14181273040269/)

### **[Obama Declares Flood Disaster \(Chattanooga Times Free-Press/Crisp\)](#)**

A Tuesday presidential declaration made official what was clear to anyone with good eyesight: Four counties along the Cumberland River in Middle Tennessee are disaster areas. Cheatham, Davidson, Hickman and Williamson counties now are able to receive grants for temporary housing and home repairs, low-cost loans to cover uninsured property losses, and other programs to help individuals and business owners recover from flooding, according to the White House. On Tuesday, Tennessee's 11-member congressional delegation petitioned President Barack Obama to approve Gov. Phil Bredesen's request for federal disaster aid. Gov. Bredesen designated 52 of 95 counties as disaster areas. President Obama expressed sympathy for the Southeast and said that he was dispatching the head of Federal Emergency Management Agency to assess damage. Widespread flooding predicted for Chattanooga on Tuesday never occurred. But devastation in Middle Tennessee caused by a 1,000-year flood continues to mount as the first wave of residents returned to flood-soaked homes.

<http://www.timesfreepress.com/news/2010/may/05/obama-declares-flood-disaster/>

### **[Nashville, Surrounding Counties Declared Disaster Areas \(WKRN-TV Nashville\)](#)**

The federal government on Tuesday authorized a major disaster declaration for the Middle Tennessee counties of Cheatham, Davidson, Hickman and Williamson. Governor Phil Bredesen asked President Obama Monday to declare 52 counties federal disaster areas following the severe storms, tornadoes and flooding that struck the state beginning Friday, April 30. The governor expected declarations for additional Tennessee counties in the coming days. "The federal government has moved quickly to assist Tennessee and I appreciate the quick action by President Obama to declare the first of what I expect will be many counties authorized for federal assistance," he said in a release issued Tuesday. The president's action makes federal funding available to affected individuals in the four counties, including both individual and public assistance.

<http://www.wkrn.com/global/story.asp?s=12426439>

### **[Tennessee Counties Get Federal Disaster Declaration \(WPLN-Radio Nashville\)](#)**

President Barack Obama has officially declared four Tennessee counties a disaster area. That will allow the Federal Emergency Management Agency to offer help, including financial assistance for people affected by the flood in Cheatham, Davidson, Hickman and Williamson Counties. Federal workers are expected to set up information centers soon. In the meantime, officials say people should go ahead with whatever repairs are needed, making sure to keep all receipts and to document the extent of damage as thoroughly as possible. It's too soon to say what the full cost of the cleanup will be, especially in residential and outlying areas, but Nashville Congressman Jim Cooper points out that there's a potential for continued economic impact if the cleanup isn't fast enough. "Estimates are about one quarter of our tourist capacity is hurt right now: some of our museums, our largest hotel. That will have a significant impact.

<http://wpln.org/?p=17111>

### **[President Declares Disasters As Davidson Death Toll Drops \(City Paper/Woods\)](#)**

President Obama declared disasters Tuesday in Nashville and three Tennessee counties, clearing the way for federal assistance to flood victims. The president's action applies to Davidson, Cheatham, Hickman and Williamson counties, but officials said damage surveys have been scheduled and more counties may be designated after the assessments. After surveying the damage by helicopter Monday, Gov. Phil Bredesen made the official request for disaster designation for 52 Tennessee counties and personally handed the documents to Federal Emergency Management Administration Craig Fugate. "Having been to a lot of disasters doesn't take the sting out of seeing another community that's suffered losses both in life and homes and property," Fugate said. "We're here to support. We're part of the team. We'll be working expeditiously on your request."

<http://nashvillecitypaper.com/content/2010-flood/president-declares-disasters-davidson-death-toll-drops>

### **[Obama Approves Disaster Declaration For 4 Tennessee Counties \(WPTY-TV Mem\)](#)**

The federal government Tuesday authorized a major disaster declaration for four Tennessee counties. Governor Phil Bredesen asked President Obama Monday to declare 52 counties federal disaster areas following the severe storms, tornadoes and flooding that struck the state beginning Friday, April 30. Tuesday's action makes federal funding available to individuals in Cheatham, Davidson, Hickman and Williamson Counties while declarations for additional Tennessee counties are expected in coming days. As a result of the extreme weather conditions, Tennessee suffered 19 confirmed fatalities. Numerous nursing homes, apartment complexes and residences were evacuated due to rapidly rising waters and flash flooding. Water rescues and helicopter extractions were performed as flood waters continue to rush over hundreds of roads through cities, towns and neighborhoods. Many residents lost all of their possessions as homes were destroyed or sustained major damages.

<http://www.myeeyewitnessnews.com/news/local/story/Obama-Approves-Disaster-Declaration-For-4/QYr6rU2avUODWF-00BF24Q.csp?rss=59>

### **[President Obama Declares Tennessee A Disaster Area \(Nashville Business Journal\)](#)**

UPDATE (7:14 p.m.): President Barack Obama's declaration covers Davidson, Williamson, Cheatham and Hickman counties. Gov. Phil Bredesen has asked the president to declare disasters in 52 counties; more declarations are expected in the coming days. Click here for a look at recovery programs and to learn whether you might qualify for help. UPDATE (5:15 p.m.): President Barack Obama has approved Gov. Phil Bredesen's presidential disaster request, according to an announcement by the office of U.S. Rep. Jim Cooper. The declaration opens up a host of federal resources to assist in recovery efforts, including Small Business Administration loans to affected businesses.

<http://nashville.bizjournals.com/nashville/stories/2010/05/03/daily18.html?surround=lfm>

### **[Obama Declares 4-County Region A Disaster Area \(Tennessean/Cass, Schrade\)](#)**

President Barack Obama declared four flood-ravaged Middle Tennessee counties a federal disaster area Tuesday as residents continued to battle ongoing water restrictions, power outages and traffic problems. The president's declaration will send much-needed federal aid to help individuals and businesses in Davidson, Sumner, Williamson and Hickman counties recover from the historic flooding that submerged entire neighborhoods and left key segments of the region's economy in tatters. Other counties are expected to get assistance later. "The assessment part goes forward, answering questions goes forward, and then we'll actually move into the recovery process of digging out the city and repairing things," Mayor Karl Dean said. "And that'll take a lot of time. We don't know right now what the full extent of the damage is. We know it's great." Preliminary damage estimates are in the hundreds of millions of dollars and probably billions, officials said, but the most immediate concern Tuesday continued to be maintaining clean water.

<http://www.tennessean.com/article/20100505/NEWS01/5050386/Obama+declares+4-county+region+a+disaster+area+>

### **[President Approves Emergency Assistance For Middle Tennessee Counties \(N-S\)](#)**

President Obama ordered federal help today to supplement state and local storm recovery efforts in Nashville and other parts of Middle Tennessee. Individuals in the counties of Davidson, Cheatham, Hickman and Williamson will be eligible for aid that includes grants for temporary housing and home repairs, low-cost loans to cover uninsured property losses and other programs to help people and businesses recover, according to a release today from the White House. Federal disaster aid also will be available to state and local governments and to certain nonprofits in the counties for debris removal and emergency protective measures. Tumultuous rains, heavy winds and severe storms hit Tennessee over the weekend, inundating Nashville and other areas. According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency, damage surveys have been set. More counties may be designated for federal aid, and other types of assistance may be used to help those affected by the storms.

<http://www.knoxnews.com/news/2010/may/04/president-approves-emergency-assistance-middle-ten/>

### **[Smyrna Begins Assessing The Damage \(Daily News Journal\)](#)**

The town got a jumpstart on the damage assessments that will be required by the Federal Emergency Management Agency prior to receiving federal assistance. President Barack Obama on Tuesday approved Gov. Phil Bredesen's request to declare 52 counties, including Rutherford, as disaster areas. "We've started some damage assessments and as much as we can, we're trying to follow FEMA protocol," O'Neal said Tuesday morning. "Federal assistance isn't guaranteed, but it'll give us a better chance of getting some funding if things are done their way." Many town departments had received calls from residents seeking assistance with flooding and clean-up issues, he said. Smyrna is compiling a database of residents needing help, but has asked that people call the Rutherford County Emergency Management Agency at 615-890-5519 or 615-890-2957.

<http://www.dnj.com/article/20100505/NEWS01/5050307/1002/Smyrna+begins+assessing+the+damage>

### **[President Signs Tennessee Disaster Declaration \(WTVF-TV Nashville\) With Video](#)**

On Tuesday, President Obama signed a Tennessee Disaster Declaration and ordered Federal aid to the recovery efforts in the areas hit by flooding and tornadoes. Federal funding is available to affected individuals in the counties of Cheatham, Davidson, Hickman and Williamson. People in an East Nashville neighborhood are eager to begin the clean up, but they must first wait for the flood waters to go away. As the floodwaters begin to recede in Cheatham County more people are making it back to their homes for the first time since the storm. In Hickman County, the National Guard began to deliver drinking water to residents. Most of the county is still under a boil water order after the historic flooding. Neighbors in North Nashville are seeing some of the damage for the first time on Tuesday from the flood waters.

<http://www.newschannel5.com/global/story.asp?s=12426490>

### **[Alexander, Corker Tour Downtown Flooding \(City Paper/Garrison\)](#)**

Not long after U.S. Sens. Lamar Alexander and Bob Corker toured areas of flooding in downtown Nashville, Mayor Karl learned Davidson County had been approved to receive federal assistance. President Obama on Tuesday authorized a major disaster declaration for Davidson, Cheatham, Hickman and Williamson counties, paving the way for federal funding to go to the disaster relief effort. Additional counties will likely be labeled disaster areas in the days ahead. At a news conference flanked by Alexander and Corker, Dean said the authorization of federal assistance signals the next stage of the recovery effort, and "will allow residents and business owners, as well as our state and local governments, to receive assistance from (the Federal Emergency Management Agency)." According to FEMA officials, it's still too early to determine how many federal dollars Davidson County could receive. There's also no timeline on when those dollars will begin to flow into the areas of devastation. To apply for assistance, call 1-800-621-FEMA.

<http://nashvillecitypaper.com/content/2010-flood/alexander-corker-tour-downtown-flooding>

### **[FEMA Aid Can Help, But Won't Be A Cure-All \(Tennessean/Snyder\)](#)**

Middle Tennessee residents and businesses devastated by the floods will get access to a host of resources now that President Barack Obama declared a major disaster for the region, including rental assistance, help with hotel bills, repair grants and low-interest loans. Many homeowners and businesses recently found out their insurance policies didn't pay for flooding. Unfortunately, they may find federal aid is limited, too, as discovered in previous disasters. "Our role is to fill in the gaps," said Kurt Pickering, a spokesman with the Federal Emergency Management Agency. "It is not intended to make you whole." Registering is the first step. The first step for those seeking aid is to register, either by calling on the phone at 1-800-621-FEMA or registering online at [www.DisasterAssistance.gov](http://www.DisasterAssistance.gov). FEMA coordinates the aid, even though the majority of the federal help in dollar terms is in the form of low-interest loans from the U.S. Small Business Administration. Those loans are available to businesses and to homeowners needing to repair or replace damaged homes. <http://www.tennessean.com/article/20100505/NEWS01/5050382/FEMA+aid+can+help++but+won+t+be+a+cure-all>

### **[Disaster Declared In Houston County \(Leaf Chronicle\)](#)**

Cumberland, Dover, Erin areas hard-hit, need water The continuing rise of the Cumberland River had Stewart County residents and emergency personnel on the alert for at least another day. The river was at 373.8 feet Tuesday evening and isn't expected to crest until it reaches 375.5 feet — more than 10 feet above flood stage — at about midnight Wednesday. Cumberland City, a low-lying area right along the banks of the river in southeastern Stewart County, already has been hard-hit. "The water was up to the windows on the Busy Bee," said Town of Cumberland secretary and longtime resident June Lafferty. "It's pretty bad." Town offices, the TVA Cumberland Steam Plant and the gypsum plant have remained open, but Highway 149, the main road into Cumberland City from both Montgomery and Houston counties, has been closed for days, along with several other area roads. At particular risk in Dover are homes along Lakeland Drive, Sandy Road and Beech Street. Dover Police Chief Kim Wallace went door-to-door Tuesday afternoon on Lakeland, encouraging residents to evacuate.

<http://www.theleafchronicle.com/article/20100505/NEWS01/5050324/1002/Disaster-declared-in-Houston-County>

### **[Downtown Nashville Assesses Damage As Lost Business Starts To Add Up \(TN/Rau\)](#)**

The combination of flood damage and the loss of electricity left downtown businesses in a painful state of limbo Tuesday with untold millions of dollars in revenue being lost on a daily basis. Some of downtown's largest and most recognizable buildings were trying to assess how severe the damage was. The Pinnacle Building, which houses one of the city's largest, most prestigious law firms, had 35 feet of water in its underground parking garage and lower levels. Keith Simmons, the managing partner at Bass, Berry & Sims, said it was too soon to know how much of the firm's more than "seven-figure" weekly income would be lost. "It's hard to say at this point," Simmons said. "People are still working, they're just not as efficient. We're not going to really know how much business we've (lost) until a few weeks down the road." Power could stay out. A spokeswoman for the Nashville Electric Service said power in and around downtown could be out until at least Friday.

<http://www.tennessean.com/article/20100505/NEWS01/5050368/1001/news/Nashville+assesses+damage+as+lost+business+starts+to+add+up>

### **[Flood Waters Still Threaten as They Recede \(WPLN-Radio Nashville\)](#)**

Federal officials have been dispatched to Tennessee by President Obama Tuesday to assess the damage from historic rainfall and widespread flooding, which killed 19 people in the state — 10 in Nashville. Rising waters have leveled off, but concern is growing over a drinking water system on life support and the fire hazard posed by thousands of flooded and vacant homes. The Cumberland River continues to threaten lives after weekend rains dropped nearly 14 inches over the Nashville area. Six firemen dressed in life jacket haul their red rescue raft back into the water at Pennington Bend, near the flooded Opryland Hotel. In this riverside neighborhood, rescue teams hauled people out of their houses Sunday night when the river was on the rise. Mike Culberson tells his men the water is still dangerous.

<http://wpln.org/?p=17103>

### **[Water Conservation Ordered; Businesses Asked To Lead The Way \(Nash Biz Journal\)](#)**

Metro Water Services and the state have asked users to cut water usage because of Middle Tennessee's flooding crisis — and that goes for businesses too. Commercial and industrial users are utilities' largest customers. Mayor Karl Dean's administration has contacted several of Nashville's largest companies specifically, in hopes they will take a lead role in cutting water usage by 50 percent and preventing outages. No outages have been reported, but the loss of one of Metro's two water treatment plants is taking a toll. Without adequate conservation, water reserves have been drawn down 63 percent, according to a news release today from the mayor's office. If customers don't start conserving, the city fears water shortages. Earlier today, the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation issued a mandatory conservation order for Davidson and Williamson counties.

<http://nashville.bizjournals.com/nashville/stories/2010/05/03/daily21.html?surround=lfm>

### **[WATER: Conservation Not Working; City's Reserves Dip To 37 Percent Capacity \(CP\)](#)**

Nashvillians do not appear to be heeding a state order to conserve water in Davidson County. On Monday, Metro's water reserve was at 64 percent of its capacity. The available supply dipped to 48 percent Tuesday morning and by afternoon, it was down to 37 percent. Metro Water Services Director Scott Potter has been urging customers to cut their usage as he provides incremental updates on the city's dwindling reserves. Customers were asked to cut their usage by half when one of the city's two water treatment plants flooded Saturday night. But many Nashvillians continued to water lawns — often by sprinklers automatically set by a timer — and wash cars splattered with dirt and mud from the record weekend rainfall. "We've got to get people to conserve water because as the demand increases, our reserve capacity is going to go down," he said.

<http://nashvillecitypaper.com/content/2010-flood/water-conservation-not-working-city-s-reserves-dip-37-percent-capacity>

### **[Water Shortage Likely Without Conservation \(Tennessean/Sarrio\)](#)**

Residents asked to cut usage 50% during recovery Nashville's fresh water reserves shrunk Tuesday, despite warnings urging residents to use less or face a shortage. Water treatment plants in Davidson and Williamson counties are operating at half capacity after record floods crippled the area, knocking out power and choking the infrastructure. City officials are pleading with residents to cut back until the facilities are at 100 percent. "People are using water faster than we're making it," said Scott Potter, director of Metro Water Services. "We need folks to stop using so much water." The city is making 81 million gallons of fresh water a day, and buying five million from the West Wilson Utility district. But Nashville residents typically use about 100 million gallons a day, and Potter suspects anxious residents are hoarding water by filling up bathtubs and buckets. As a result, the city's reserve supply, which makes up the difference, is being depleted. Monday, the reserve supply filled up 66 percent of available holding space but by Tuesday evening, it filled only 37 percent.

<http://www.tennessean.com/article/20100505/NEWS01/5050370/Shortage+is+likely+if+residents+don+t+conserve+water>

### **[Nashville Urges Residents To Conserve Water \(WKRN-TV Nashville\)](#)**

The water supply provided by Metro Water Service continues to be safe, but there is some concern that Nashville could experience a water shortage if conservation measures are not taken. In a press conference Tuesday morning, Scott Potter, Director of Metro Water Services, said the city's reserve water supply has dropped 15% since the flood. He said while the Omohundro Water Treatment Plant, one of the city's two plants, continues to operate at normal capacity, with the K.R. Harrington Water Treatment Plant not working it is imperative customers use water for drinking and food preparation only. Residents should also watch out for leaks and report such to the department. Potter said the Harpeth Valley Utilities District treatment plant, which serves areas in Bellevue, has also been affected by the flood and their customers are asked to conserve water for essential uses as well.

<http://www.wkrn.com/global/story.asp?s=12424381>

### **[Rumors Of Water Shutoff Are False, City Says \(City Paper/Garrison\)](#)**

Rumors that Metro's water supply could be cut off are false, and Metro officials are urging customers to stop taking precautions — such as filling their bathtubs with water — for something that won't happen. According to Metro Water Services spokesperson Sonia Harvat, some Davidson County residents are filling bathtubs, buckets and other containers with water in anticipation they could lose access to the city's water supply. Harvat said rumors water could be turned off are not true, adding that it's placing undue strain on an already depleted supply. "This reaction is placing a significant strain on our water supply," Harvat said. "We ask all citizens and businesses to stop using water for uses other than drinking, cooking, hand washing, and other critical uses." Earlier today, Metro Water Services Director Scott Potter said the city's water reservoir had depleted from 66 percent of its capacity to 48 percent in one day.

<http://nashvillecitypaper.com/content/2010-flood/rumors-water-shutoff-are-false-city-says>

### **[Lights Out in Downtown Nashville \(WPLN-Radio Nashville\)](#)**

Floodwaters from the swollen Cumberland River are receding in Nashville. Several businesses are damaged in the historic downtown known for its honky-tonk live music bars, but even those that aren't badly flooded won't be up and running for awhile. Power is out and will remain out for several days in the tourist district along lower Broadway. An underground electrical substation in the area is badly damaged. Adam Hessler manages the Cadillac Ranch bar. Every day he's closed, he loses thousands of dollars. The bar did get some water, but he'd hoped to open his doors anyway. "Even with the basement I was like okay once we get this pumped out we'll be good to go to open today and then when came in today power's out and its like...not going to happen." Power is also out at the Schermerhorn Symphony Center and Bridgestone Arena.

<http://wpln.org/?p=17099>

### **[Power Out In Core Of Downtown Nashville \(Nashville Business Journal\)](#)**

A large swath of downtown businesses, from honky tonks on Broadway to the AT&T building that marks Nashville's skyline, are without power today and likely to remain dark until Friday following further damage from flood waters. Nashville Electric Service's substation on Demonbreun Street lost its remaining circuits at about 3:15 a.m. today due to water flooding transformers housed in underground vaults, spokeswoman Laurie Parker said. The area runs from Demonbreun to Commerce Street, and from Fifth Avenue near Bridgestone Arena to the Cumberland River. Though the number of overall outages in Middle Tennessee has come down, NES is unable to pump the water out or safely reactivate its Demonbreun lines until the flood waters recede, Parker said. "It's a mess," she said. "It's a waiting game to see how long it takes for the water to recede, to energize those lines."

<http://nashville.bizjournals.com/nashville/stories/2010/05/03/daily14.html?surround=lfm>

### **[Corps says Dam Release Prevented Additional Flooding \(WPLN-Radio Nashville\)](#)**

Emergency officials are defending the decision to release water from area dams, despite calls from people worried that the move will exacerbate flooding. Stephen Halford heads up Emergency Management Efforts for Metro Nashville. He says his phone banks have taken a number of calls from people concerned about the release. But he points out that water is constantly allowed through dams as a normal part of controlling a river's flow. "The release of water from the dam is not a bad thing, it's a good thing." A statement from the Army Corps of Engineers says water levels behind Old Hickory Dam reached a record high of just over 450 feet on Sunday afternoon. That's seven inches below the top of the dam. Without the release of water, officials say the lake itself would have flooded. They estimate that if that control had been lost, the Cumberland River could have risen an additional four feet downstream in downtown Nashville.

<http://wpln.org/?p=17113>

### **[Travel Around City Remains A Struggle \(Tennessean/Haas\)](#)**

Interstates recover quickly, but many roads still closed Davidson County's streets, highways and interstates slowly churned back to life Tuesday, with the majority of the main arteries passable. But getting in and around the city remained a challenge. "All the interstates around Nashville are good," said Winston Gaffron, Middle Tennessee regional director for the Tennessee Department of Transportation. There continue to be problem spots, to be sure. The pavement has crumbled in one westbound lane of Interstate 24 near Mill Creek, Gaffron said. Vietnam Veterans Boulevard in Sumner County, the main artery commuters use to get to Interstate 65 and then into Nashville, could be closed for up to 48 more hours, Hendersonville Mayor Scott Foster said. It wasn't uncommon for the commute from Hendersonville to Nashville on Tuesday morning to take more than two hours as drivers used Gallatin Road as an alternative.

<http://www.tennessean.com/article/20100505/NEWS09/5050371/Getting+around+Nashville+remains+a+struggle>

### **[Neighborhoods Sift Through Sludge, But Strangers Ease Agony \(TN/Brooks, Vaughn\)](#)**

Official aid scarce, but strangers ease agonizing process In the flood-stricken neighborhoods of Nashville, the air is stifling hot, choked with the stench of mold and mildew and the fetid gunk that settled in carpets after rivers flowed back to their banks. The houses are turned inside out, their muddy contents spread on the lawns to dry under the curious gaze of hundreds of onlookers who cruise through the disaster zone, gawking. It's been just days since the skies opened up over Tennessee and unleashed the flood of the century, and the slow, painful cleanup has only just begun. Allison Patton stood in her front yard Tuesday, clutching a small jewelry box and crying with relief that one more keepsake had been salvaged from the wreckage of her home. It was a pair of earrings, given to her by her husband, Bob. Bob Patton died in February, and his family had seen more than enough grief before the Harpeth River came crashing through their back door.

<http://www.tennessean.com/article/20100505/NEWS01/5050387>

### **[Crews 'Rockin' And Rollin' To Repair Storm Damage \(Jackson Sun\)](#)**

James Burrous sat astride his blue Suzuki motorcycle and surveyed what used to be the closest route to his class at Jackson State Community College from Medina. "Not gonna try it, even on my bike," Burrous said, shaking his head in disbelief at the narrow strip of pavement left intact on Christmasville Road. "Even if it is wide enough for my bike, it looks like it could give way any minute." The mishmash of pavement slabs, twisted metal culverts, tangled wire cables and broken PVC pipe is a familiar sight across West Tennessee after floodwaters swept away roads, washed out culverts and undermined what used to be solid pavement. The Jackson Street Department has estimated repairs to city streets will cost about \$1.1 million, while Madison County road damages total about \$2.4 million, authorities said Tuesday. Crockett County Road Supervisor Milton Legions said he estimated his costs at several hundred thousand dollars.

<http://www.jacksonsun.com/article/20100505/NEWS01/5050320/1002/Crews--rockin--and-rollin--to-repair-storm-damage>

### **[Flooded Families In 'Total Shock' \(Daily News Journal\)](#)**

Cleanup begins for many with water slow to recede For the past two days, John Parker's house sat in nearly 2 feet of water. Faded brown watermarks are reminders of how high the water used to be. "I sat here (Monday) for a couple of hours and looked at it. I was in total shock," the 27-year-old said. A stench lingers along the 8900 block of Powell's Chapel Road from plumbing problems caused by the floodwater. "The water in the house (Monday) was solid brown — like a stopped up toilet," Parker said. Parker and many of his neighbors within a 2-mile radius were hit hard by the floods that doused Middle Tennessee over the weekend. They are used to the field near their homes flooding when it rains. "But it's nothing like this," Parker said as he looked at the area Tuesday. "This is catastrophic." County officials came to Parker's 1,200-square-foot home Tuesday and deemed it a total loss. He grew up in the home and was raising his 5-year-old son, Cordell, there.

<http://www.dnj.com/article/20100505/NEWS01/5050323/1002/Flooded+families+in++total+shock+>

### **[In Memphis Area, Floodwater Threats Recede \(CA/Charlier, Mckenzie\)](#)**

Memphis-area officials on Tuesday reopened more roads, launched environmental assessments and watched the last threats recede from a weekend of flooding caused by what federal officials say was a once-in-a-thousand-years storm. In hard-hit Millington, the Health Department began work to head off problems from mosquitoes, rats and mold after floodwaters drained, said administrator Norman C. LaChapelle. In the aftermath of the flooding, the number of people requiring shelters and the number of roads closed both had dropped by Tuesday. The shelter at First Baptist Church in Millington, operated by the American Red Cross Mid-South Chapter, received 67 people overnight Monday, down from an initial estimate of up to 200. Road closures in Shelby County have been reduced to three: Raleigh-Millington from New Allen to south of Fite; Brunswick Road from Tracy to Idaville; and Osborntown Road between Godwin and Moose.

<http://www.commercialappeal.com/news/2010/may/05/water-threats-recede-new-woes-lie-beneath/>

### **[Power Returns To Most In Montgomery, But Other Issues Linger \(Tennessean\)](#)**

Counties start to pick up the pieces Montgomery County continued its 8 p.m.-6 a.m. curfew Tuesday for areas affected by flooding, particularly along Riverside Drive, Southern Parkway and downtown Clarksville. Most homes in the county had power restored Tuesday, but water continued to be a problem, said county spokeswoman Elizabeth Black. "The Red River is going down pretty quickly, but the Cumberland River is just not stabilized at this point," Black said Tuesday. The county had performed nearly 150 rescues and had one possible storm-related death Monday morning, she said. Road closures included sections of Highway 48/13, and the Cunningham Bridge was shut to all but emergency vehicles. Officials from Clarksville Gas and Water and other area utilities had a simple message for residents: The water supply is OK.

<http://www.tennessean.com/article/20100505/NEWS01/5050378/Counties+start+to+pick+up+the+pieces>

### **[River Crests \(Leaf Chronicle\)](#)**

Cumberland reaches 62.8 feet, 16 over flood stage After two days of flooding brought Clarksville to its knees, the Cumberland River is done rising. But it could still be a while before Riverside Drive resembles a road. The Cumberland reached its crest at 7 a.m. Tuesday at 62.8 feet — more than 16 feet above its flood stage, according to the National Weather Service. And though current NWS projections have the river receding steadily over the remainder of the week, returning its flood stage by 7 p.m. Friday, the river held steady Tuesday, staying above 62 feet until 7:30 p.m. That means the 2010 flood fell short of the record-setting 1937 flood, which hit 65.5 feet, according to Leaf-Chronicle archives. But it surpassed the 1882 flood's 62.7 depth by 1 inch. The Cheatham Dam has been steadily spilling over — as it was designed to do, an Army Corps of Engineers spokeswoman noted — putting greater strain on downstream communities such as Clarksville.

<http://www.theleafchronicle.com/article/20100505/NEWS01/5050309/1002/RIVER-CRESTS>

### **[Drinking Water Supplies OK Despite Floodwater Dangers \(Leaf Chronicle\)](#)**

Overflow contains mix of wastes, chemicals Officials from Clarksville Gas and Water and other area utilities had a simple message for residents: the water supply is OK. They are, however, still urging residents to conserve to reduce the amount of sewage being put into the system. Though the Water Treatment Plant is fully functional, CGW General Manager Pat Hickey said the Wastewater Treatment Plant has been underwater since yesterday, when employees were forced to evacuate and the facility was shut down. With the treatment plant inoperable, Clarksville's sewage has been flowing directly into the Cumberland River. And we aren't alone — Tisha Calabrese-Benton, a spokeswoman for the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, said a number of wastewater facilities upstream have been shut down as well.

<http://www.theleafchronicle.com/article/20100505/NEWS01/5050303/1002/Drinking-water-supplies-OK-despite-floodwater-dangers>

### **'Real, Real Lucky': Tragedy Avoided (Times-Gazette)**

"We were real, real lucky." One year after Shelbyville was hit with heavy rains that caused a half million dollars in damage to its drainage system, the public works director said that the city dodged a bullet this time. Shelbyville Public Works director Mark Clanton said that the city got around six inches of rain over the weekend, while parts of the county received as much as 10 inches. The Community Collaborative Rain, Hail & Snow Network confirmed rainfall amounts of 6.22 inches in Shelbyville through 7 a.m. Monday. Bedford County schools were closed Monday due to high water. Clanton praised Tennessee Valley Authority for managing the amount of water flowing from the spill gates of Normandy Reservoir. Last Friday, the lake was already down two feet from its normal summer pool of 875 feet and the wet weather put the level of the water at 878.10 Monday morning, meaning the reservoir had come up five feet over the weekend.

<http://www.t-g.com/story/1631724.html>

### **Forked Deer Continues Rising, NWS Predicts Largest Flood In Dyer Co. History (SG)**

The Forked Deer River is higher than it has been in 73 years, with the National Weather Service anticipating this to be the largest flood in Dyersburg history. Emergency responders learned this morning that the NWS has pushed back its prediction of when the river will crest to 7 a.m. on Wednesday morning. The service also now predicts flood levels to reach 31 feet at that time. When first responders left a briefing at 2 p.m. on Monday afternoon, they expected the river to crest at 30 feet by 7 p.m., Tuesday evening. When local emergency officials reconvened at 9 a.m. on Tuesday morning, the river was already at 30.42 feet and still rising. What is most on the minds of emergency personnel in the area is the safe evacuation of residents in low-lying Dyer County communities. Levees protecting Dyer County residents are being monitored at regular intervals to be sure no leaking or breaches occur. Residents in communities protected by levees like the Bruce Community in Dyersburg are requested to stay alert and have a plan they can implement quickly. Two routes are currently available to evacuate residents from the Bruce Community, if the need arises.

<http://www.stategazette.com/story/1631846.html>

### **Forked Deer May Have Crested (State Gazette)**

Emergency management officials are keeping a close eye on the river gauge measuring the level of the Forked Deer River this evening. The equipment providing the official measurements for the river was serviced by the National Weather Service on Tuesday morning after local officials received a measurement of 30.48 feet. The river then remained steady, causing both Emergency Operations Manager Mark Grant and NWS officials to have their suspicions about whether the readings were accurate. Both Grant and NWS technicians said river readings should fluctuate even if the river crests, so a steady number all day long has raised suspicions about just how accurate the readings may be. The NWS still predicts the Forked Deer to crest by 7 a.m. on Wednesday morning, so officials will arrive in Dyersburg early Wednesday morning to test the equipment.

<http://www.stategazette.com/story/1631939.html>

### **River Rises 43 Feet In Two Days (Columbia Daily Herald)**

Damage from this weekend's historic rainfall will likely exceed \$1 million for the Columbia area alone, with the Duck River rising to levels not seen in a decade and flash floods wreaking havoc across the region. While Maury County suffered some damage from this weekend's storms, it escaped the catastrophic flooding that sent muddy water streaming into the heart of Nashville and claimed at least eight lives in the Music City. "Considering everything that has happened, we are fortunate," Columbia Mayor Dean Dickey said. Numerous water rescues occurred over the weekend, but no injuries or deaths were reported in the Columbia area. While the damage paled next to the destruction elsewhere in the state, Columbia lives were also shaken by Tennessee's historic flood. Olivia Pemerton said she was one of several people evacuated by the American Red Cross in Columbia to the Days Inn on Nashville Highway after flash flooding overwhelmed her apartment on McMeen Circle.

[http://www.columbiadailyherald.com/articles/2010/05/04/top\\_stories/01flood.txt](http://www.columbiadailyherald.com/articles/2010/05/04/top_stories/01flood.txt)

### **Rutherford Still Drying Out From Flood (Daily News Journal)**

Flooding problems still abounded across Rutherford County two days after a storm system dumped between 8 and 12 inches of rainfall on the Mid-state. Rutherford County Emergency Management Agency estimates put total rainfall amounts in Murfreesboro at 8 inches over two days with 10- to 12- inch estimates in the Smyrna and La Vergne areas. The west fork of the Stones River crested Monday afternoon at 24 feet pushing 24,000 cubic feet of water per second, according to EMA Assistant Director Tim Hooker. "Current stream flow is 1,670 cubic feet of water per second," Hooker said around noon Tuesday. "Pre-storm the flow was about 40 cubic feet of water per second." A little more than a dozen area roadways remained impacted by floodwaters Tuesday, with most problems remaining in Smyrna and La Vergne, according to EMA officials. But a few streets in Murfreesboro remained impacted.

<http://www.dnj.com/article/20100505/NEWS01/5050316/1002/Rutherford+still+drying+out+from+flood>

### **Tourism Officials Reach Out, Open Doors (Chattanooga Times Free-Press/Best)**

Only days after floodwaters from the Cumberland River ravaged Nashville, local tourism officials said they are doing everything they can to assist that city. Mike Shuford, executive director of the Chattanooga Convention Center, said the primary goal is to keep conventions in Nashville and then relocate them elsewhere in the state if necessary. Damaged by the floods, the Gaylord Opryland Resort and Convention Center is closed with no indication of when or if it may reopen. "It's certainly tragic what happened, and we as Chattanoogaans will do everything we can to help Opryland and its guests moving forward," said Bob Doak, president of the Chattanooga Area Convention and Visitors Bureau. "We're all very concerned as a tourism industry." Part of that help could mean accommodating guests at area hotels and meeting spaces. Though it is unclear whether conventions will be relocated to Chattanooga, conventions already scheduled for this area may make it difficult to accommodate larger groups hoping to move their events from Nashville, Mr. Doak said.

<http://www.timesfreepress.com/news/2010/may/05/tourism-officials-reach-out-open-doors/>

### **Uninsured Flood Victims Weigh Options (WSMV-TV Nashville)**

Some Mortgage Companies Require Insurance For Flood Zones As mid-state residents try to salvage what they can from their flooded homes, most know they don't have flood insurance. Cindy Lockhart is wondering what her options are, knowing nothing she owns -- from her lamps to vintage prints of dogs -- is covered. She's among the hundreds of thousands of people in Davidson County without flood insurance. "It's horrible," said Lockhart. But her next-door neighbor Paul Davis has it. While Lockhart's yard isn't in a flood zone, Davis' is, and his mortgage company required flood insurance. "We're really fortunate," he said. "I'm concerned about my neighbors who don't have insurance." Many flood victims are asking if their homeowner's insurance will cover their damage, especially if sewage leaked in.

<http://www.wsmv.com/weather/23454293/detail.html>

### **Marketing Music City After Flood (WTVF-TV Nashville)**

Many Nashville landmarks have been put under water by the flooding, and the CMA festival is roughly a month away. Nashville's tourism directors are finding a way to market Music City. The flood is putting the Grand Ole Opry between giant pillars at Legislative Plaza. "We're picking right up just the day after the flood waters entered our current Grand Ole Opry house and presenting a show here at War Memorial Auditorium," said Pete Fisher, VP and general manager of the Grand Ole Opry. There's little the waters have not dampened or destroyed. The downtown Hilton Hotel has no power, and the Renaissance has no hot water. Nashville's most famous lodging location, the Gaylord Opryland Resort, is waterlogged at least for the next 90 days. The CMA music fest will bring \$22 million in direct spending to Nashville. Many wonder if Nashville will have enough hotel space to accommodate the country music fans.

<http://www.newschannel5.com/global/story.asp?s=12427931>

### **Schermerhorn Concert Hall Dodges Bullet (City Paper/Garrison)**

Nashville's Schermerhorn Symphony Center dodged a catastrophe, as rising floodwater in the facility's basement just missed the Laura Turner Concert Hall. According to symphony spokesperson Alan Bostick, water inside the facility is receding after missing the main concert stage and seating area by a mere 8 to 12 inches. "We really caught a break there," Bostick said. "We're very pleased about that." The state-of-the-art music facility, which opened in 2006, still has substantial flooding in its basement where the center's kitchen, grand piano and concert organ are all housed. The flood level is slowly going down. "We can't even access the basement by going down the stairwell," Bostick said. "We're facing water all the way to the top step. It would take scuba gear to get down there. We just don't know the extent of the damage. We just know it's submerged in water. Chances are, they're terribly damaged." The facility's pipe organ — a \$2.5 million Schoenstein — likely suffered extensive damage to its operating mechanism and console, both were in the Schermerhorn's basement level.

<http://nashvillecitypaper.com/content/2010-flood/schermerhorn-concert-hall-dodges-bullet>

### **Nashville Shores Opening Still On Track (Nashville Post/Wheeler)**

Flood didn't damage new rides under construction At least one Nashville business in the path of this weekend's torrential flooding has avoided serious damage. The Nashville Shores water park, where workers had been wrapping up millions of dollars worth of construction on a new wave pool and lazy river, has been largely unaffected by the flooding and officials expect to open as planned later this month. Nashville Shores Director of Marketing Daniel Strobel noted that some portions of the park have flooded but said the damage is manageable. "It will take a little extra work, a little extra cleaning but we can do it," he said. The park had been ahead of schedule on the construction of the new attractions and will open its doors for the summer on May 22. Strobel and his team also will be filling 350 seasonal positions they recruited from more than 1,000 applicants at a recent job fair.

[http://www.nashvillepost.com/news/2010/5/4/nashville\\_shores\\_opening\\_still\\_on\\_track](http://www.nashvillepost.com/news/2010/5/4/nashville_shores_opening_still_on_track)

### **Schools Probably Won't Extend Semester (Tennessean/Sisk)**

Education commissioner says he'll grant waivers for flood days Students probably will not be asked to stay late because of flooding, as state and local officials said they are not inclined to extend a school year. Officials at Metro Nashville Public Schools said they plan to ask the Tennessee Department of Education for a waiver from the state's minimum number of school days, as floodwaters followed heavy snows in forcing the district to run through all of the extra days built into the academic calendar. Representatives for other large local districts likewise said they plan to seek waivers or would not need to do so to end on time. Education Commissioner Tim Webb said Tuesday that he intends to grant waivers to any district that asks for one because of flooding. The decision means most local students will not be asked to report beyond the previously scheduled end of their school years. Education officials said there was little reason to extend the year because most standardized tests have been administered and schools were already winding down the year.

<http://www.tennessean.com/article/20100505/NEWS04/5050357/1018/NEWS>

## Opinion

### [Times Editorial: In The Wake Of Rain, Floods \(Chattanooga Times Free-Press\)](#)

Meteorologists have a complex explanation for what prompted the unremitting weekend rains that brought flooding, numerous deaths and heavy property damage to Nashville and left a trail of damage elsewhere in Tennessee and in two other states. The simple truth, though, will do. Thunderstorms continuously developed over the same areas from early Saturday morning until Sunday evening. The result: More than 13.5 inches of rain in the state capital. Up to 20 inches of rain were recorded in other areas. The result is catastrophic. The toll and the devastation were revealed in greater detail Tuesday as waters from the Cumberland River and numerous lakes, creeks and streams began to recede. Many sections of Nashville were still under water. At least 10 deaths in the city were reported. At least eight other storm-related deaths were reported elsewhere in Tennessee. Officials fear the toll will increase as emergency management personnel gain access to the areas most damaged by flooding. Property damage was extensive, in downtown Nashville, in the city's urban and suburban neighborhoods, and across much of West and Middle Tennessee. Gov. Phil Bredesen, in fact, declared 52 of the state's 95 counties disaster areas after an aerial inspection of the region. The heaviest damage, however, was in and around Nashville.

<http://www.timesfreepress.com/news/2010/may/05/wake-rain-floods/?opiniontimes>

### [Guest Columnist: Why National Media Glossed Over Flooding \(City Paper\)](#)

If you live outside of Nashville, you may not be aware, but our city was hit by a 500-year-flood over the last few days. The national news coverage gave us 15 minutes, but went back to focusing on a failed car bomb and an oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. While both are clearly important stories, was that any reason to ignore our story? It may not be as terror-sexy as a failed car bomb or as eco-sexy as an oil spill, but that's no reason to be ignored. The Cumberland River crested at its highest level in over 80 years. Nashville had its highest rainfall totals since records began. People drowned. Billions of dollars in damage occurred. It is the single largest disaster to hit Middle Tennessee since the Civil War. And yet... no one knows about it. Does it really matter? Eventually, it will... as I mentioned, there are billions of dollars in damage. It seems bizarre that no one seems to be aware that we just experienced what is quite possibly the costliest non-hurricane disaster in American history.

<http://nashvillecitypaper.com/content/city-voices/commentary-why-national-media-glossed-over-flooding>

### [Editorial: Local Media Did Its Job Well \(Jackson Sun\)](#)

On Tuesday, we offered thanks to area emergency management personnel, first responders and volunteers for their tireless work during the recent weather crisis. There is another group of individuals who also deserve thanks, those who work for local media. These dedicated professionals worked around the clock to keep the public informed, answer questions, share information, tell the stories of our friends and neighbors, explain the disaster and keep the public abreast of the storms' aftermath. This is not about blowing our own horn. It is about recognizing the work of our media colleagues and the important role they play in keeping the public informed. As the torrential rains came and the tornado sirens began to wail, it was comforting to be able to turn on the television at 3 a.m. and see the familiar faces of WBBJ-TV weather experts explaining what was happening. Their knowledge and use of sophisticated weather technology helped pinpoint trouble spots, tornado warnings, advancing storms and offer predictions of what we could expect next.

<http://www.jacksonsun.com/article/20100505/OPINION01/5050326/1014/OPINION/Local-media-did-its-job-well>

**[Editorial: Nashville Needs Our Help With Epic Flood \(Daily News Journal\)](#)**

When Rutherford County was slammed by Good Friday tornadoes in 2009, neighbors from Nashville and across the region came to our aid. With Nashville suffering through one of its worst floods in history, it is time to return the favor. Many of Rutherford's residents work in Nashville and go there for numerous occasions, everything from sporting, concert and arts events to shopping and recreational outings. More and more, people who live in Davidson are working in Rutherford and coming here for shopping and other activities. We depend on each other every day, and this is the time to strengthen that bond. Certainly, Rutherford suffered serious flooding in Smyrna, La Vergne and north Rutherford. But Nashville's flooding is catastrophic from the standpoint of long-term impact on homes and its economy. It's not only the state's capital city, but the economic hub for Middle Tennessee. Much of the business district, especially tourist areas such as 2nd Avenue and Broad are flooded beyond comprehension, and Music City's famous Grand Ole Opry House along with Opryland Hotel are under water.

<http://www.dnj.com/article/20100505/OPINION01/5050313/1014/opinion/EDITORIAL++Nashville+needs+our+help+with+epic+flood>

**FLOOD Across the State Line****[Crews Begin To Clear Wreckage \(Timesdaily.Com\)](#)**

Salvage crews will return to Shoal Creek today for another attempt at removing docks from Emerald Beach that were swept away Monday by swift-moving floodwater and became lodged beneath the U.S. 72 bridges near Killen. Salvage workers managed to pull a floating pier and covered dock from beneath the bridges Tuesday, but were unable to free a larger covered dock before darkness arrived.

<http://www.timesdaily.com/article/20100505/articles/5055012>

**[Kentucky Governor: 'Next 2 To 3 Days Are Critical' \(Lexington Herald – Leader\)](#)**

At least four people are dead and hundreds of roads and schools are still closed after a brutal two days of storms, state authorities said Monday. The storm drenched much of southern and Central Kentucky with up to 11 inches of rain over the weekend, causing widespread flooding. At a news conference, Gov. Steve Beshear said initial estimates show at least \$6.2 million in damages, a number that is expected to grow in coming days.

<http://www.kentucky.com/2010/05/04/1250021/4-dead-40-counties-declared-states.html>

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