

FLOOD EDITION

May 13, 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.

Residents and business owners who sustained losses can begin applying for assistance immediately by registering online at www.fema.gov or by calling 1-800-621-FEMA.

[Nashville Water Plant Withstands Flood And Test Of Time \(Tennessean/Rau\)](#)

Preservation award for Omohundro spotlights design marvel during crisis The Omohundro Water Treatment Plant found itself in the news last week when it became Davidson County's only functioning treatment facility. But the Omohundro was on tap to receive attention this week for another reason: The 121-year-old facility happened to be among the Metro Historical Commission's annual preservation award winners. "The Omohundro plant really exemplifies the best of preservation," Metro Historical Commission staff member Fred Zahn said. "If the staff hadn't kept the building in such good shape over the years, we'd really be up a creek." Omohundro received the preservation award because of a recent major rehabilitation project, which was completed by Nashville contractor W.L. Haley and designed by Nashville architectural firm Centric Architecture. Although the facility has components that date to its original construction in 1889, the award-winning portion of the complex was the filtration building.

<http://www.tennessean.com/article/20100513/NEWS01/5130333/Nashville+water+plant+withstands+flood+and+test+of+time>

[Franklin Picking Up The Pieces — 700 Tons Of Them \(City Paper/Phillips\)](#)

While much of the flood-related attention has focused on hard-hit areas of Nashville, many families in Franklin have been working to clean up their own water damage. So far, the Franklin Solid Waste Department has collected more than 700 tons of debris from neighborhoods along the winding Harpeth River. More than 300 residences and 50 nonresidential buildings in Franklin sustained flood damage, Communications Manager Milissa Reieron said. The city is about 95 percent finished with its damage assessment. Most of the 350 homes and businesses suffered water damage, but only a "small portion" of residents were displaced, Reieron said. "I would say there was about 3 to 6 feet of water in homes," she said. "Over near Pinkerton Park, which was completely under water, in the Ewingville subdivision, some homes took as much as 8 feet of water." Like many flood-ravaged cities in Middle Tennessee, Franklin is offering free building permits to help victims start over.

<http://nashvillecitypaper.com/content/2010-flood/franklin-picking-pieces-700-tons-them>

[Some Flooded Nashville Neighborhoods Aren't Getting Much Help \(Tennessean/Haas, Rau\)](#)

One by one, flood victims trickled into the East Park Community Center on Tuesday looking for help. One man who arrived at the city-designated disaster information center needed to know how to report a gas leak, but no one from the gas company was there to answer questions. During the day, about a dozen people came for tetanus shots, but no one was there to administer them. There were booths set up for the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Red Cross and the Metro Health Department, but they were unmanned. It was not clear who set up the booths. East Nashville resident Angie Edwards said those same stations were empty on Wednesday. Edwards has been showing up at the center to help volunteer since early last week. In the aftermath of the destructive flooding, some neighborhoods feel like they are slipping through the cracks even though the city says it has been sending help as quickly as possible.

<http://www.tennessean.com/article/20100513/NEWS01/5130335>

[Locals Assist In Flood Relief \(Chattanooga Times Free-Press/Cofer\)](#)

Once a sea of lights, Nashville's Briley Parkway remains dark more than a week after unprecedented flooding devastated parts of the state and killed at least 18 people. "When I first got here a week ago, we were in some dire straits," said Will Rowe, a Chattanooga Area Red Cross volunteer currently in Nashville. "I drove up to the Gaylord Opryland Hotel and it was dark. It is still dark. I actually got lost on Briley Parkway because there were no lights." Mr. Rowe is one of several local volunteers who has been assisting with the flood relief effort. He handles lodging arrangements for Red Cross workers coming into the area. Despite roads and homes that still are under water, he said people "are very upbeat." "It's the attitude of, 'Let's gather up our boot laces and get back on the job and move ahead with our lives,'" he said.

<http://www.timesfreepress.com/news/2010/may/13/locals-assist-in-flood-relief/>

[State Urge People To Stay Out Of Flooded Rivers \(Columbia Daily Herald\)](#)

The Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation and the Tennessee Department of Health urge people to continue to stay out of rivers and streams in areas impacted by last week's flooding, and to wash thoroughly if contact cannot be avoided. While the flood waters have receded, many areas suffered significant damage to infrastructure, including wastewater treatment plants and collection systems — the network of pipes and pumps that move wastewater from homes and businesses to the plants for treatment. "The professionals in our local communities' wastewater collection and treatment systems are working round-the-clock to restore full treatment capabilities," said Environment and Conservation Deputy Commissioner for Environment, Paul Sloan.

http://www.columbiadailyherald.com/articles/2010/05/12/top_stories/06floodhealth.txt

[Dam Regs Questioned \(Jackson Sun\)](#)

Lawmakers say exemptions in law should be studied State Sen. Roy Herron said Wednesday he hopes legislators will halt deregulation of dams in the state until the issue can be studied. Herron, D-Dresden, and state Rep. Jimmy Eldridge, R-Jackson, said they plan to study the Safe Dams Act of 1973 to determine if changes should be made to the law to ensure public safety. Herron said he wants to enact legislation before the current legislative session ends, which might be as soon as next week. "The world looked different to Noah after the flood, and Tennessee looks different to a lot of us after our floods," Herron said. "What might have seemed logical 37 years ago, may be both foolish and life-threatening today. At the very least, these dams whose failure would threaten human lives must have some safety precautions so citizens aren't killed." Of particular concern is the farm-pond exemption included in the Safe Dams Act. The exemption allows non-federal dams to be downgraded to farm ponds and go unregulated if the water behind them is not open to the public and the property has fewer than three owners.

<http://www.jacksonsun.com/article/20100513/NEWS01/5130315/1002/Dam-regs-questioned>

[State Could Get \\$341 Million More From Feds](#)

if Congress approves a six-month extension of enhanced Medicaid matching funds to beleaguered states, Finance Commissioner Dave Goetz said Tuesday. He cited the figure during presentations of Gov. Phil Bredesen's latest budget proposals in separate appearances before the House and Senate Finance Committees. Mr. Goetz cautioned there is no guarantee Congress will approve the extension. The governor is proposing using \$51 million of the money to secure two economic development prospects with offers of infrastructure and other incentives.

<http://www.timesfreepress.com/news/2010/may/11/tennessee-state-could-get-346-million-more-feds/?breakingnews>

[More Than 1,200 Ask For FEMA Help In Williamson \(Tennessean\)](#)

The 1,279 registrations were made online and through FEMA's 800 number, according to Mike Thompson, director of the county's Emergency Management Agency. Meantime, the Williamson County Disaster Recovery Center had assisted 26 residents on Monday and Tuesday. The center opened Monday. The center is open 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily until further notice on Church Street side of Franklin City Hall.

<http://www.tennessean.com/article/20100512/NEWS01/5120361/1002/More+than+1+200+ask+for+FEMA+help+in+Williamson+>

-Opinion-

[National Media Overlooked, Underplayed Flood Disaster \(Tennessean\)](#)

First of all, it wasn't just Nashville. There were 52 counties in Tennessee that the national media ignored in the early days of a storm with no name, and that doesn't include the parts of Kentucky that also suffered from the Flood of 2010. It wasn't just a typical spring storm. The head of the Tennessee Emergency Management Agency said the recording-breaking rainfall of up to 18 inches in 36 hours was like hitting 150 home runs in a season or rushing for 4,000 yards in the National Football League. It wasn't just the Cumberland River, which swelled into the streets of Music City. There were flash floods that turned small rivers and creeks into rushing bodies of water that stole lives from people trying to escape. That includes the elderly couple who got in their car to flee the rising water around their home. With water flowing with deceptive force across a flooded roadway, they both died as their car was swept away, the man because he used a wheelchair, and his wife because she refused to leave his side.

<http://www.tennessean.com/article/20100513/OPINION03/5130325/1007/opinion/National+media+overlooked++underplayed++arrived+late+to+flood+disaster>

[Obama Conspicuously Absent In Wake Of Flood \(Daily News Journal\)](#)

So ... where is President Obama? It has been more than a week now since non-stop rains fell across the Midstate, destroying countless lives, homes, businesses and property. Never before in Tennessee history had so much precipitation fallen in such a short period, sending local rivers and streams overflowing into nearby streets, homes, schools, churches and businesses. Only a miraculous effort by local residents, volunteers and emergency personnel prevented a tragedy such as what occurred from being even worse. Some volunteers worked 48 and even 72 hours non-stop to protect local families and to save those in danger from harm. I and a grateful community salute you and thank you from our collective hearts. Gov. Phil Bredesen, Nashville Mayor Karl Dean and the rest of the emergency staff did an incredible job evacuating almost 1,000 men, women, and children and even, in some cases, family pets, from the oncoming floods. Scene after scene replayed on the television of heroic efforts taking place around the clock, and the mayor and his staff were right there, even through the wee hours of the morning, keeping the populace up to date on breaking news and coverage of this emergency.

<http://www.dnj.com/article/20100513/OPINION02/5130307>

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