



**US Army Corps
of Engineers**
Pittsburgh District

News Release

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NAVIGATION LOCK OPERATIONS RETURNING TO NORMAL

PITTSBURGH – Navigation lock operations on Pittsburgh's three rivers are returning to normal after closures or reduced operations due to high water and flooding. All navigation locks on the Monongahela and Allegheny Rivers are open and fully operational. On the Ohio River, the small lock chamber at Emsworth remains closed due to high water but at all other locks both chambers are open and fully operational.

As a result of the high water and swift currents a number of barges broke loose last week on the Ohio River. One of two breakaway barges that lodged against the CSX Railroad Bridge upstream of Emsworth's back channel dam has been recovered by the owner and the other barge is secured to the shore at Neville Island. At Pike Island Locks and Dam, only one of the 16 barges that broke loose remains to be removed. The remaining sunken barge, which has no impact on navigation or the operation of the dam, will be removed as soon as river levels permit.

The local US Coast Guard Marine Safety Office and the Pittsburgh District are partnering to resolve the situation at Montgomery Locks and Dam where the towboat M/V Elizabeth M. remains sunk below the dam and three of its six barges are sunk on the dam. Campbell Transportation Co. has positively located and marked two of its three remaining barges while survey operations continue to positively locate the third barge. Concurrently, channel sweeping operations are being conducted to ensure a clear channel so that limited transportation of coal and non-environmentally sensitive cargos to upstream destinations through the Coast Guard designated Safety Zone (Mile 31.5 to 35, which includes Montgomery Locks) can be restored. Removal operations for the barges sunk in the river below the dam are expected to begin on Wednesday, January 12. Recovery of the M/V Elizabeth M. and the barges on the dam will be delayed until the river level drops sufficiently to allow personnel to safely approach the vessels. The US Coast Guard Marine Safety Office will oversee all operations relative to the barges sunk in the river below the dam; the Corps of Engineers will oversee all operations relative to the towboat and the barges on the dam.

Joint US Coast Guard/Corps of Engineers situational update briefings will be held at 3:00 p.m. daily from January 12th through January 14th. The briefings will be held at the Marine Safety Office in Suite 1150 of the Kossman Building, 100 Forbes Avenue in downtown Pittsburgh.

Further down the Ohio River, near Reedsville, Ohio, traffic is restricted at the Belleville (Mile 204) and Willow Island (Mile 162) Locks due to breakaway barges that sank on the dam blocking five of the gates at Belleville.

For more information on the Belleville and Willow Island Locks and Dams contact Huntington District Public Affairs Office at 304-399-5599. For more information on recovery efforts below the Montgomery Locks and Dam contact LTJG Justin Covert, US Coast Guard at 412-644-5809, Ext. 2102.