



PRESS RELEASE

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DPW WORKS TO ADDRESS FLOODING AND DRAINAGE ISSUES

Residents are encouraged to do their part through simple actions

INDIANAPOLIS – On Tuesday, some areas of the city experienced 4.5 inches of rainfall in just three hours, which caused trouble for many commuters and residents; however, many neighborhoods across Indianapolis experience flooding and drainage issues year-round.

“We know that flooding and drainage issues are a challenge for residents,” said Indianapolis Mayor Greg Ballard. “I’ve heard all about it when talking with people at Mayor’s Nights Out and other public meetings. The Indianapolis Department of Public Works (DPW) has been working hard to address these issues, but more work needs to be done. As we’ve seen this week, our drainage system is in serious need of upgrade and repair. That’s why I’ve created the new RebuildIndy initiative to further address these and other infrastructure issues that are much needed.”

RebuildIndy is Mayor Ballard’s initiative to restore deteriorating thoroughfares, residential streets, sidewalks and bridges, as well as address neighborhood drainage and flooding issues and demolish unsalvageable abandoned homes that pose a public safety threat to neighborhoods. Infrastructure improvements will create local jobs and ultimately increase public safety for neighborhoods and residents, which will make Indianapolis a more livable city.

Improving Neighborhood Drainage and Flood Control

Indianapolis’ terrain is fairly flat without many hills or changes in elevation. The city’s urban landscape also contains hard surface areas, such as buildings, streets and parking lots, which can’t naturally absorb storm water. These factors lead to standing water in streets and yards in many neighborhoods after it rains.

In addition, some home and business owners do not maintain the ditches, swales and creeks on their private property. Poor maintenance prevents these drainage systems from working properly. Neighborhood creeks and ditches also can become clogged with debris, making it hard for storm water to be carried away from neighborhoods.

(more)

“Through significant investments throughout recent years, DPW is working to address these problems by bringing drainage infrastructure improvements to high priority neighborhoods,” said DPW Director David Sherman. “These projects have made an impact in key areas that have historically struggled with flooding and drainage problems.”

For example, DPW recently completed an important drainage project on Sten Court on the city’s south side, where residents experienced terrible flooding every time it rained. Floodwaters rose to the tops of pickup truck beds and mailboxes and damaged homes. Mayor Ballard instructed DPW to address the problem, and the project recently was completed under budget and earlier than anticipated. Tuesday, city engineers visited the Sten Court neighborhood only to find the water was draining just as it was designed to do.

Reporting Problems

“We really encourage residents to tell us about the problems they’re seeing in their neighborhoods, since they know them best,” said Sherman. “When residents report problems, we are able to better prioritize projects and allocate resources to address the issues.”

To report drainage problems, residents and business owners should contact the Mayor’s Action Center at 327-4MAC (4622) or through RequestIndy, a new online portal that allows residents to report problems in their neighborhoods, at www.indy.gov/mac. All complaints are investigated and prioritized.

Sandbags are available for residents experiencing flooding issues and can be picked up the DPW maintenance garage at 1725 S. West St. Residents are responsible for loading and transporting the sandbags. The city garage is open from 7 a.m to 3:30 p.m Monday through Friday.

How You Can Help

Residents also can do their part to prevent flooding through simple actions, such as clearing storm drains of debris. Drainage infrastructure located on private property must be maintained by the property owner, according to Sections 431-506 and 561-211 of the Revised Code of the City and County (visit www.municode.com for more information).

Home and business owners should:

- Maintain swales and ditches, including roadside ditches, by mowing to 8 inches or less and keeping them free of fill and other debris.
- Work with neighbors to clear brush, debris and other blockages from neighborhood creeks and ditches.
- Use approved rock or concrete for erosion control for creeks that run through private property. Check with the city’s Office of Code Enforcement (327-8700) to ensure the specific type of rock or concrete is permissible in waterways.
- Keep storm inlet grates clear of debris, trash and leaves.
- Make sure driveway culverts are free of debris, in good repair and set to proper elevation so that water does not back up.
- Call 327-4MAC (4622) to report illegal dumping in waterways.

Storm water improvements are funded by the Marion County storm water utility fee, which funds capital projects, operations and maintenance costs for storm water system improvements. Currently, a single-family residential storm water bill is \$2.25 per month.