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MEDIA ADVISORY

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Major sewer pipe on Main Street requires repair; traffic closures announced

*MSD is working with a consultant on a repair plan for a 60-year-old pipe
between Fourth and Seventh streets*

LOUISVILLE, KY – The south side parking lane and four-feet of sidewalk on Main Street between Fourth and Seventh streets will be closed to traffic and pedestrians — beginning today for the sidewalk, and Friday evening, for the parking lanes — in an effort to ensure public safety. MSD discovered damage to a major sewer pipe that runs under that section of the roadway.

The damaged 84-inch diameter sewer pipe, which is about 60 years old, carries approximately 40 percent of the wastewater flow generated in Louisville Metro. This pipe runs under the south side parking lane on Main Street, between Fourth and Seventh streets. Expert inspectors are concerned that corrosion caused by sewer gases in the pipe could cause a cave-in in that area.

MSD commissioned an inspection of this pipe — called the Ohio River Interceptor — in November 2017, and used technology that allows engineers to analyze the pipe without having to empty it. The resulting March 1, 2018, report revealed that some of the concrete and rebar pipe was wearing away, especially in the section of the sewer main between Fourth and Fifth streets. MSD then asked two additional outside engineering firms, with experts in large sewer pipe rehabilitation, to independently review the inspection report. Both expert firms confirmed the damage and potential risks of the pipe, and expanded the area of urgency to include Fourth to Seventh streets.

MSD is now working with consultants on repair options and timelines, while also working closely with other utilities and Louisville Metro to evaluate any other risks and ensure public safety.

Until the repairs are complete, MSD will close the south side parking lane and about four-feet of sidewalk between Fourth and Seventh streets, and is monitoring the area on a daily basis for any signs of collapse. The closures reflect safety concerns by both MSD and Louisville Metro government. “We realize these closures are disruptive, and do not make this decision lightly, as this area is the heart of our city’s business, entertainment and tourism districts,” says MSD Executive Director Tony Parrott. “However, public safety clearly must be our top priority.”

Media Interview Opportunity

MSD Executive Director Tony Parrott

Today at 6 PM

MSD Main Office, 700 W Liberty

Please park in the lot directly behind the building and come in the back door

Background

This pipe is called the Ohio River Interceptor and is one of Louisville's largest sewer pipes. It runs under Main Street — from the Butchertown area in the east to I-264 in the west, it then turns southwest to MSD's Morris Forman Water Quality Treatment Center. The pipe ranges in size from 60- to 186-inches in diameter. It was constructed of concrete with two layers of rebar in the 1950s and is approximately 25-feet deep.

The Ohio River Interceptor is part of the same pipe that caved in on Main and Hancock streets in late August 2017. That point repair took six weeks to complete.

Coincidentally, on Friday, March 2, 2018, a section of roadway on Fifth Street at the intersection with Main Street caved-in due to a broken piece of 42-inch brick stormwater pipe. The stormwater pipe has been in service since the 1870s. That point repair has been made.

The Ohio River Interceptor is one of the hundreds of projects identified in MSD's Critical Repair & Reinvestment Plan. The Plan includes funding to rehabilitate major sewer lines within the service area, including this interceptor. For more information about this plan, please visit LouisvilleMSD.org/CriticalRepairPlan.



LouisvilleMSD

About MSD

The Louisville/Jefferson County Metropolitan Sewer District (MSD) works to achieve and maintain clean, environmentally safe waterways for a healthy and vibrant community. The organization's more than 600 employees provide wastewater management, drainage and flood protection services across the 376 square miles of Louisville Metro. In addition to operating and maintaining Louisville Metro's sewer system, floodwall system, water quality treatment centers and flood pumping stations, MSD invests in hundreds of infrastructure improvement projects each year, plants more than 1,000 trees and other vegetation annually to enhance water filtration and reduce runoff, and provides numerous outreach programs to inform and educate the community about protecting our waterways.