



NEWS RELEASE

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Parks & Rec temporarily closes N. Greenway and Walter Hill Park

North Murfreesboro Greenway, Walter Hill Park Closed Pending Evaluation of Walter Hill Dam

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. — The City of Murfreesboro Parks and Recreation Department temporarily closed the North Murfreesboro Greenway and Walter Hill Park until further notice pending an evaluation of Walter Hill Dam. It comes after the dam apparently sustained damage from high river flows during last weekend's heavy rainfall.

No permanent structures along the Stones River are believed to be in danger of flooding from a dam breach. Currently, recreational activity, including fishing, is restricted downstream of the dam. Fishermen and others should avoid the area until an assessment is completed.

Late Sunday afternoon Christmas Day, Dec. 25, authorities were advised by a citizen of a potential breach of Walter Hill Dam near Highway 231. Water was reportedly spilling out of a small hole in the northern side of the wall approximately four feet from the base of the dam.

City engineers report that the dam is exhibiting "unusual flow patterns" on the base of the dam near the former powerhouse at a concrete plugged low-level drain. Engineers and State inspectors are making fuller assessment of the dam today to determine its structural integrity and a plan of action for making repairs.

"In a worst-case scenario, if the dam were to give way, engineers are confident there should be no downstream structural flooding issues, as structures along the East Fork of Stones River are 30 feet or more above the river," stated Assistant City Engineer Sam Huddleston. "Only farmland downstream is potentially at risk of flooding in this scenario."

The dam is not expected to give way, but out of an abundance of precaution, the City of Murfreesboro is closing Walter Hill Park and Trailhead and the North Murfreesboro Greenway until the dam can be fully assessed. Engineering firm Smith Seckman and Reid, Inc. (SSR) had been contracted to provide an engineering assessment of the City-owned dam before the potential breach was reported. The City biannually assesses the 100-year-old dam for structural integrity as required in the City's 2-year operating permit issued in Sept. 2017 under the Tennessee Safe Dams regulations.

For City News online, visit www.Murfreesborotn.gov.

Photos Attached:

1. *Walter Hill Dam.jpg*.
2. *Walter Hill Dam 2.jpg*.
3. *City of Murfreesboro Logo.jpg*

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