



**US Army Corps
of Engineers**
New Orleans District

News Release

Public Affairs Office, 7400 Leake Ave.
www.mvn.usace.army.mil

Tel. 504-862-2201
Fax 504-862-1724

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: John Hall, 504-862-2201

December 19, 2001

N.O. hurricane bridge contract awarded *Corps, Levee Board will floodproof two bridges in Gentilly*

NEW ORLEANS – Construction will begin in January on the first of two more bridges to protect New Orleans from Lake Pontchartrain's hurricane storm surges, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers said Wednesday.

In all, 10 bridges are being floodproofed, with six completed. The Corps and the Orleans Levee District are building the seventh and eighth bridges announced Wednesday. The cost is shared 70 percent federal, 30 percent local.

The newest floodproofed bridges will be built one at a time to replace existing bridges one long block apart over the London Avenue Canal in the Gentilly area. The work will take two years.

The 2-lane Filmore Avenue Bridge will be replaced first, with another 2-lane bridge. During the one-year construction, traffic will be detoured to the Mirabeau Avenue and Robert E. Lee Blvd. bridges

Next, the 4-lane Mirabeau Avenue Bridge will be replaced with a 4-lane bridge. During the one-year construction, traffic will be detoured to the Filmore and Gentilly Boulevard bridges.

Both bridges will be constructed by Angelo Iafrate Construction Co. of Kenner under a \$4.21 million contract, awarded by the Corps on Dec. 12.

The bridge floodproofing will protect neighborhoods along the London Avenue, Orleans Avenue and 17th Street canals from storm surges from Lake Pontchartrain.

The system of levees, floodwalls and bridges is designed to protect against fast-moving Category 3 hurricanes. Floodproofing the bridges closes a gap in the floodwalls.

In floodproofing, an entire bridge is removed, including the support piles. It is replaced by a bridge with stronger piles. The roadway is sealed underneath and flanked with floodwalls that connect with the existing floodwalls atop the canal-side levees.

Floodproofed bridges provide superior protection compared with the sandbags currently used to close the roadway 36 hours ahead of a hurricane. The new bridges also have the advantage of allowing traffic, such as emergency vehicles, to continue to use the bridges.

The next floodproofing contract will be awarded shortly to replace the 2-lane Hammond Highway Bridge over the 17th Street Canal with a 4-lane bridge. Traffic will continue during the two-year project.