



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

News Release

Public Affairs Office
504-862-2201

www.mvn.usace.army.mil

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: John Hall, 504-862-2201

August 21, 2003

Filmore Bridge in Gentilly will reopen on Friday, Aug. 22. Mirabeau Bridge is closing Wednesday, Aug. 27 for hurricane floodproofing.

NEW ORLEANS – The two-lane Filmore Avenue Bridge over the London Avenue Outfall Canal will reopen on Friday afternoon, Aug. 22, weather permitting final construction. It has been closed since March 2002 for hurricane floodproofing.

The four-lane Mirabeau Avenue Bridge will close the following Wednesday to be replaced with a four-lane bridge. During the one-year construction, traffic will be detoured to the Filmore and Gentilly Boulevard bridges.

Both bridges are under a \$4.21 million contract by James Construction Group of Kenner. The Corps awarded the contract on Dec. 12, 2001.

“The new bridges are two of the final links in the chain of protection provided by hurricane levees and floodwalls,” said Al Naomi, the Corps’ senior project manager for the Lake Pontchartrain and Vicinity project. “In addition to keeping the water out, we want to keep the roadways open.”

In all, 10 bridges are being floodproofed, requiring the replacement of each bridge in its entirety, including the support piles. The new bridges are sealed on the bottom and both sides, effectively closing a gap in the hurricane floodwall. One more floodproofed bridge remains to be constructed where Robert E. Lee crosses the London Avenue Outfall Canal. That contract is scheduled for award in 2004.

Without floodproofing, these bridges must be sandbagged during tropical storms. Floodproofing allows these vital roadways to remain open. Total cost is about \$28 million.

Floodproofing of bridges is a portion of the four-parish, \$742 million Lake Pontchartrain and Vicinity project. It is being built by the Corps and levee boards in Orleans, Jefferson, St. Bernard and St. Charles parishes.

Once construction is complete, the levee districts take over operation and maintenance of the hurricane protection projects.

The system of levees, floodwalls and bridges is designed to protect against fast-moving Category 3 hurricanes.