



SCEMD

Office of the Adjutant General

State Emergency Operations Center
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Hurricane Matthew

NEWS RELEASE #5

For Immediate Release

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Dam, reservoir owners, operators should begin lowering water levels

Columbia, S.C. (Wednesday, October 5, 2016, 7:15 p.m.) - Owners and operators of reservoirs in areas potentially impacted by rain and winds from Hurricane Matthew should check their dams and take appropriate steps to safely lower the water levels today and through the next several days in preparation for the storm, according to the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control.

Hurricane force winds can topple trees causing large voids where trees are uprooted. Loss of soil from a dam can impact its structural integrity and can provide a path for water from the pond to exit in an uncontrolled manner. This condition may lead to failure of the dam.

"Owners of reservoirs with functional gates or flashboards should considering operating them to provide additional storage for the anticipated rainfall," said Jill Stewart with DHEC's dam safety program. "If there is a dam downstream of your dam and you are lowering your water level, please call the owner of that dam and advise him or her about what you are doing. Before and after the storm has passed, any accumulated trash and debris should be cleared from spillways."

DHEC has implemented the CodeRED system to automatically notify dam owners via voice call, text messages and email to take steps in preparation for the potential significant rainfall.

"Dam owners should be aware of the conditions at their dams during such events," Stewart said. "If problems develop and failure of the dam might be imminent, the owner or operator of the dam should contact local public safety officials and downstream property owners."

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