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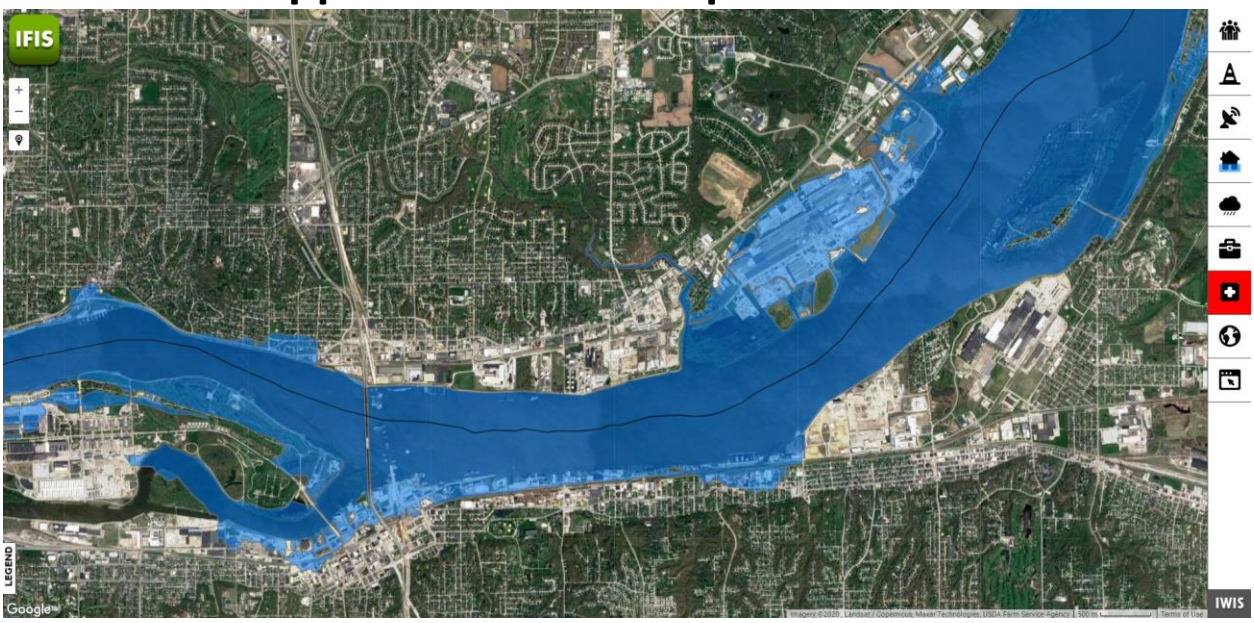
New Mississippi River Flood Maps



Flood inundation maps for Lock and Dam No. 15 upstream of Davenport at a scenario-based flood stage of 26 feet.

The Iowa Flood Center (IFC) at the University of Iowa has recently developed scenario-based flood inundation maps for the Mississippi River, stretching from Lock and Dam No. 11 in Dubuque to Lock and Dam No. 19 in Keokuk. The new maps show the extent and depth of predicted floodwaters, providing communities with advanced flood information for planning and decision-making.

The new Mississippi River flood inundation maps are publicly available online through the IFC-developed Iowa Flood Information System (IFIS). IFIS now offers Iowans access to flood inundation maps for over 30 cities and towns in Iowa. The user-friendly platform visualizes flood information in a Google Maps–based environment, helping local decision-makers, emergency responders, and home and business owners understand their flood risks and reduce the impacts of flooding on life, property, and critical infrastructure. **Please note:** These are NOT regulatory floodplain maps that can affect insurance. Rather, they offer people information to help them stay safe and be better prepared when water levels begin to rise.

The Mississippi River endured significant, record-breaking flooding beginning in March 2019 and lasting through August 2019. Heavy rain, saturated and frozen soils, and snowmelt created conditions ripe for the devastating flooding. The Quad Cities river gauge at Rock Island broke its 1993 flood crest record when

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the river peaked at 22.7 feet. The volume and force of the water caused a temporary levee breach in Davenport that flooded businesses, cars, and apartment buildings, overwhelming the downtown area. The prolonged flooding lasted for months along the river and impacted thousands of people's lives, costing billions of dollars in recovery.

As Iowans prepare for and respond to the heavy rainfall and potential flooding from Tropical Strom Cristobal expected to impact Iowa this week, the new flood maps will provide communities with valuable information about what to expect and how to prepare. The National Weather Service has issued a flood watch for eastern and central Iowa, and rainfall rates could be as high as 2 inches per hour.

"After the 2019 floods, we felt strongly that our team's expertise could add value by helping to communicate information to help reduce flood risks for communities along the Mississippi River," says IFC Associate Director Nathan Young.

Young explains that the IFC has not typically been involved in activities on Iowa's bordering rivers, leaving those areas to fall under the jurisdiction of federal partners such as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. However, as we continue to experience more frequent and severe flood events in Iowa, the IFC's unique flood monitoring, mapping, and modeling abilities have proven to be an asset to partners at the local, state, and federal level.

The Iowa Legislature established the Iowa Flood Center at the University of Iowa in 2009 to provide accurate, science-based information to help Iowans become more flood-resilient. It is the nation's first academic center devoted solely to the study of floods. For more information, visit www.iowafloodcenter.org.

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