

Construction Project Requires Canal Draw-Down in early 2009

(January 2009) The Augusta Canal will be drained of water for its entire length from early January through mid-April, 2009. The Canal will be emptied to allow Augusta Utilities Department contractors to install two 60-inch water lines underneath the Canal. Repairs and maintenance to the Canal banks and other structures also will be conducted during the draw-down. The Petersburg Boats will be out of service for Canal tours during this period. Normal Canal operations are expected to resume in early March. The Augusta Canal Discovery Center will remain open for normal business despite the draining of the canal.



Questions & Answers about the Draw-Down

1. When? January 26 through April 6 or later, estimated.*
2. Why? The City of Augusta Utilities Department is working on major improvements to the raw water pumping station, located at the end of Goodrich Street, approximately four miles from the Canal's headgates. The station was originally built in 1899 and still provides water for the city, but it is time to upgrade much of the equipment and prepare the station for service into the 21st century.
3. What sort of projects will be done? Two new pipes will be placed underground beneath the Canal to carry the raw water from the Canal to the water treatment plant at Daniel Village. Also, while the Canal is dry, the Augusta Utilities Department will repair areas of bank erosion, remove some fallen trees and do maintenance on the hydropower plant at Enterprise Mill.
4. How will the Canal be drained? Control gates will be closed at the headgate at the Savannah Rapids and the remaining water will exit through the mills tailraces and other drainage structures.
5. How will this affect the water supply? Under normal operations, the Canal is a significant source of Augusta's water. During the draw-down new, diesel-powered back-up pumps will draw water directly from the Savannah River and pump it to the treatment plant on Highland Avenue.
6. Will the whole Canal be emptied? Yes, but there will be some water remaining in some sections
7. When was the last time the Canal was completely drained? No records exist but it has been many years since the entire Canal has been drained.
8. How will this affect Petersburg Boat Tours and recreational Canal use? There will be no boat tours from January 8 until March 9. However, reservations will be taken for school and group trips, which will resume March 10*. The walking and bike trails and towpath will be open for

users, although some temporary closing can be expected near the Raw Water pumping station construction site.

9. When will boat tours begin again? General public tours are expected to resume around March 30.

10. Will the Canal Discovery Center be open? The Canal Discovery Center at Enterprise Mill will be open on winter schedule: Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

For more information:

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*Timeframe may vary depending on progress of projects