




Dam Monitoring for City of Charlotte Storm Water Services

APWA-NC Stormwater Management Division Educational Session: Stormwater in the Future: Real-Time Controls, Sensors, and Automation
Monday, June 8, 2026

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Objectives

- ◁ City Storm Water Services Dam Safety Program Overview
- ◁ Dam Monitoring, High Hazard Dam Monitors, and Emergency Notifications
- ◁ Future Monitoring

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Long-Term Stewardship Program (L-TS)

- ◁ Within the Regulatory Division and Surface Water Quality and Environmental Permitting Program.
- ◁ Necessary to meet NPDES permit requirements as an MS4 Community.
- ◁ Provide management of City owned stormwater natural resource assets.
 - Assets include; Stormwater Control Measures (SCMs), stream/wetland improvement projects, and pond and dam projects.



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City Storm Water Dam Safety Team

- ◁ Cross-Disciplinary team of 10 Scientists, Geologists, and Engineers.
- ◁ Dam Safety is housed in the L-TS
 - **L-TS Manages:**
 - Day to day operations
 - Minor repairs and maintenance
 - **Watershed Planning and Project Implementation Manages:**
 - Project evaluations
 - Manages consultants on major repairs
 - **Engineering Manages:**
 - Emergency Action Plan updates
 - Assists with developing construction plans for major repairs



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Storm Water Dams

Key
 ● Non-Regulated Dams (10)
 ● Regulated Dams/Fair Condition (25)

GAMARUS COUNTY

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City Storm Water Dam Safety Team Initiatives

Storm Preparedness

- Pre-Hurricane Season Inspections
- Pre and Post Storm Inspections and coordination with EOP/CFD
- Pre and Post storm maintenance
- Severe Storm Preparation Procedures and annual updates

Emergency Action Plans (EAPs) for Storm Water Managed Dams

- EAP Development
- EAP Annual Updates
- EAP Training

Dam Inspections and Monitoring

- Routine Annual Inspections (35 Dams)
- Drainage Infrastructure Inspections
- Piezometer Well Monitoring
- High Hazard Dam Monitoring

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City Storm Water Dam Safety Team Initiatives

Maintenance and Repairs

- Routine Maintenance
- Minor and Major Repairs
- Resident Coordination

Evaluations

- Minor and Major repairs
- Project re-design or enhancement

Risk Management

- Dam Owner Coordination
- Hazard Mitigation Planning
- Risk Management
- Mecklenburg County
- Emergency Management


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Dam Monitoring


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Dam Monitoring

- ◁ Dam inspections
- ◁ Piezometer monitoring
- ◁ Infrastructure Inspections
- ◁ High Hazard dam monitors and emergency alert system



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Dam Inspections

- ◁ Annual Inspections
- ◁ Pre-Hurricane Season Inspections
- ◁ Pre and Post Storm Inspections





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Infrastructure Inspections

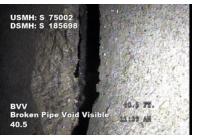
USMH: S 75002
DSMH: S 155685



IWJ
Infiltration Weep Joint
8.9 FT
11/28/18




USMH: S 75002
DSMH: S 155685




BVV
Broken Pipe Void Visible
40.5
11/28/18

USMH: S 14217
DSMH: S 15622




HDV
HDPE Toe Drain
27.3

USMH: S 14217
DSMH: S 15622




HDV
HDPE Toe Drain
26.7


USMH: S 75002
DSMH: S 155685



JOL
Joint Offset Large
27.2



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Infrastructure Inspections

USMH: CLEAN OUT
DSMH: MAIN



USMH: CLEAN OUT
DSMH: MAIN
Infiltration Weep Joint/Weep Joint
December 2015
December 2015
December 2015





Photo 2B – PVC Outlet & HDPE Toe Drain

TOE DRAINAGE SYSTEM

- Replace 156 linear feet of 4" perforated HDPE toe drain with 156 linear feet of 6" perforated PVC toe drain.
- Remove and replace 32 linear feet of 4" PVC toe drain outlet pipe with 6" PVC, ensuring positive slope.
- Install cleanouts at all bends to provide access points for future inspection and cleaning.
- Construct small concrete headwall with screen to secure end of toe drain outlet.



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STORM WATER Mecklenburg County

Piezometer Monitoring

- ◁ Monitoring of the phreatic surface through the dam.
- ◁ Monthly monitoring to establish baseline trends.




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STORM WATER Mecklenburg County

High Hazard Dam Monitoring Network

- ◁ Set up through Fins and managed by Mecklenburg County Storm Water.
- ◁ Currently 10 projects – adding two in FY28.
- ◁ Data Logger: Sutron XLink 500
- ◁ Two sensor types:
 - Pressure Level Sensors
 - OTT Hydromet PLS500 (Pressure Level Sensor), accuracy = 0.05% of reading
 - Radar Level Sensors
 - OTT Hydromet RLS (Radar Level Sensor), accuracy = 0.01 ft

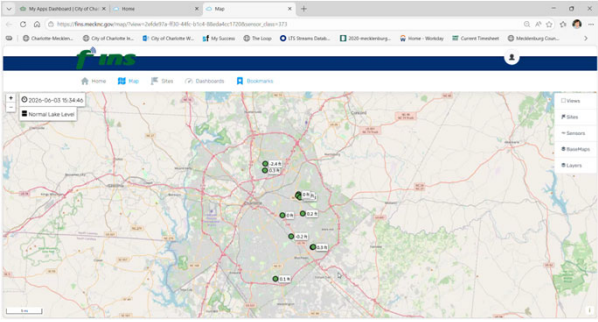


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STORM WATER Mecklenburg County

High Hazard Dam Monitoring Network




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STORM WATER Mecklenburg County

High Hazard Dam Monitoring Network

- ◁ Pressure Level Sensor
 - OTT Hydromet PLS500 (Pressure Level Sensor), accuracy = 0.05% of reading
 - Uses a ceramic pressure cell to measure water level.
 - Selected for projects with no riser structures in the pond.
 - Provides water level, humidity, and temperature.






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High Hazard Dam Monitoring Network


- ◁ **Radar Level Sensor**
 - OTT Hydromet RLS (Radar Level Sensor), accuracy = 0.01 ft
 - Uses impulse radar technology to measure water level.
 - Easy to install, chosen for projects with riser structures in the pond.
 - Provides water elevation only.
 - Energy-efficient
 - No impact from temperature, water pollution, or sediment load.
 - Flat antenna design means less insect / spider interference.





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Storm Event Monitoring



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Emergency Alerts



- ◁ **Investigate Level, Event Level 2, Potential Dam Failure**

Test Notification- INVESTIGATE Level:
This is a message from the Charlotte-Mecklenburg FINS at 1970-01-01 00:00:00 UTC A flood INVESTIGATE is in effect; MECKL-207 - Hunter Acres Pond Dam is at 1 foot below the Crest of the Dam.

THREAT STATUS: INVESTIGATE LEVEL, EVENT LEVEL 2, YELLOW: Potential dam failure situation, rapidly developing FINS observed sensor Level, Pond Elevation @ MECKL-207 - Hunter Acres Pond Dam, current value is -9999.99. This is 1 foot below the Crest of the Dam 783.32 feet. In the last 10 min, FINS observed sensor Level, Pond Elevation @ MECKL-207 - Hunter Acres Pond Dam, had a change > threat threshold of 0 feet.

FINS LAST REPORTED:
Sensor Level, Pond Elevation @ MECKL-207 - Hunter Acres Pond Dam, last reported at 2025-11-12 19:00:06 UTC with a value of -9999.99.
https://fins.mecknc.gov/site/?site_id=1496&site=cf0bc5a4-e4d0-4b7f-be5a-e73fcf83d366

Do not reply to this message.
If you need additional information, send an email message to damsafety@charlottenc.gov END OF MESSAGE

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Emergency Alerts



- ◁ **Emergency Level, Event Level 2, Dam Failure Imminent**

Test Notification- EMERGENCY Level:
This is a message from the Charlotte-Mecklenburg FINS at 1970-01-01 00:00:00 UTC A flood EMERGENCY is in effect; MECKL-207 - Hunter Acres Pond Dam is at 1 foot below the Crest of the Dam.

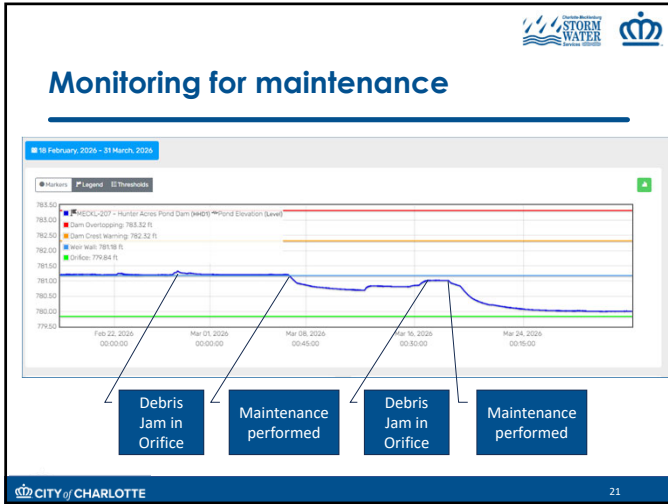
EMERGENCY STATUS: ALERT LEVEL, EVENT LEVEL 1, RED: Urgent!!! Dam failure imminent or is in progress FINS observed sensor Level, Pond Elevation @ MECKL-207 - Hunter Acres Pond Dam, current value is -9999.99. This is at the Crest of the Dam 783.32 feet. In the last 10 min, FINS observed sensor Level, Pond Elevation @ MECKL-207 - Hunter Acres Pond Dam, had a change > threat threshold of 0 feet.

FINS LAST REPORTED:
Sensor Level, Pond Elevation @ MECKL-207 - Hunter Acres Pond Dam, last reported at 2025-07-25 17:30:20 UTC with a value of -9999.99.
https://fins.mecknc.gov/site/?site_id=1496&site=cf0bc5a4-e4d0-4b7f-be5a-e73fcf83d366

Do not reply to this message.
If you need additional information, send an email message to damsafety@charlottenc.gov END OF MESSAGE

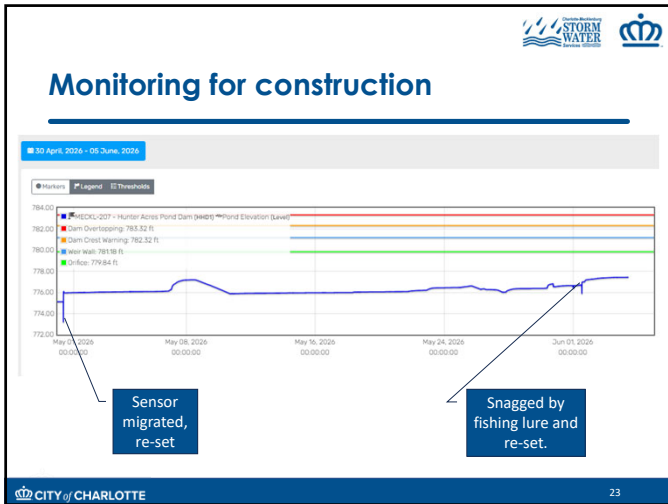
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Future monitoring

- ◁ Cameras with HDD monitors
- ◁ Low level alerts
- ◁ Drone inspections
- ◁ Toe-drain monitoring
- ◁ Future piezometers will have blue tooth data logger capability

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Thank you

Questions?

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