

# Flood Task Force / University Heights Association

<https://universityheightsonline.com/>

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## Question Remains: What Caused the July 2022 Flood?

**Press Advisory, March 25, 2024.** Over a year and a half after homes were devastated by the July 26, 2022 flood, there continues to be a sharp divide over what caused that flood. MSD (Metropolitan St. Louis Sewer District) has repeatedly denied that debris in the River des Peres tunnel contributed to the flood.

But residents of University Heights, a neighborhood greatly affected by the flood have a very different view. Mary Ann Gaston, who lives closest to the mouth of the tunnel, says “I watched as multiple dump trucks were loaded with rock, concrete and various debris that had been removed from the River des Peres tunnel. One pile waiting to be loaded was estimated at 50 tons. The estimated 500 tons of debris had to have impacted the flow of water through the tunnel.”

As she watched debris being removed, Gaston recalled the terrifying experience of the flood: “I woke up the morning of July 26, 2022 to see the street flooded. In the basement was a 4 ½ foot geyser shooting out of the floor drain. The basement filled to the rafters in 12 minutes. A large rush of water totally surrounded my house.”

Where do we go from here? Connie Fry, who is active with the Flood Task Force, expresses the view that “I would like some reliable data on causes of the flood that go beyond speculation and denial.” For the first time, scientific research will be presented on March 26, 2024 regarding debris blocking the passage of water through the tunnel and contributing to the flood.

Understanding what is behind floods is critical for planning how to mitigate their effects in the future. Barbara Chicherio, who lost everything in her basement from the 2022 flood, notes that “MSD still has not published a schedule of when the River des Peres tunnel will be inspected and cleaned. For all we know, that did not happen between the time it was constructed in the 1940s and the flood of 2022. We do not want to wait another 80 years for the next inspection.”

**SPEAKING:** Mark Holly, University City Stormwater Commission

**WHAT:** Tunnel Blockage and the Flood of July 2022

**WHERE:** University City High School Library, 7401 Balson, University City MO 63130

**WHEN:** 7:00 pm Tuesday, March 26, 2024

**SPONSOR:** Flood Task Force / University Heights Association

**“U Heights 2022 Flood: The River des Peres Tunnel”** We will hear from Mark Holly of the Stormwater Commission. Mark did a computation model of the River des Peres (RdP) channel and tunnel entrance near Kingsland and Vernon. The study was based on estimating the volume of water entering the tunnel during the July 26, 2022 flood. A year after the flood, an MSD subcontractor removed over 500 tons of debris from the tunnel. The study found that a 10% blockage of the tunnel would result in the overtopping of flood water within 1.5 minutes. It implies the need for tunnel maintenance.

The event is NO COST but you should register via EVENTBRITE (ticket \$0.00). Email [fitzdon@aol.com](mailto:fitzdon@aol.com) or go directly to <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/dartmouth-tunnel-flood-model-tickets-853288026457?aff=oddtcreator>