



US Army Corps
of Engineers®
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Corps of Engineers – Coast Guard caution exposed river sandbars unsafe

MEMPHIS, Tenn., Aug. 16, 2012 – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and U.S. Coast Guard advise residents to exercise caution regarding sandbars exposed by the extremely low water on the Mississippi River. Although the sandbars may look like a beach, they can be very unstable and may collapse into the river under the weight of a person.

“Although the river level is low, the speed and strength of the current remains high,” Dave Berretta, the Corps’ Chief of Hydraulics and Hydrology said. “It is still a very dangerous river.”

Officials from the U.S. Coast Guard agree and offer this advice.

“The best stance for safety on the rivers is prevention. Avoiding dangerous situations like traveling across unstable sandbars are the best way to increase one’s safety near the river,” Lt. Ryan Gomez, U.S. Coast Guard said. “Also, the use of a proper fitting U.S. Coast Guard approved lifejacket is always a great idea when conducting any kind of activity near the water.”

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Sandbars-2/2/2/2

During the extreme low water in 1988 three children and an adult who tried to save them drowned after they were swept into the Mississippi River when a drought-weakened sandbar they were standing on collapsed near Ripley, Tenn.

Three people also drowned under similar circumstances near Natchez, Miss., in 1988.

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