



NEWS RELEASE

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

BUILDING STRONG.

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Corps stresses Water Safety on the Chattahoochee River

MOBILE, Ala. – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Mobile District stresses water safety on the Chattahoochee River. As hotter temperatures continue to rise, more people are using local rivers and reservoirs to ‘cool off’ and to fish. Local emergency responders are making more rescues on the Chattahoochee River when releases are made from Buford Dam. The Corps’ number one priority is safety. The Corps continues to work with the National Park Service, local municipalities and cities, marinas, schools, and other non-government agencies to get the word out about water safety.

The Chattahoochee River from Buford Dam downstream to Atlanta is one of the most popular trout fishing, tubing, and boating rivers in Georgia. “The Corps cautions visitors to use extreme care while on the river below Buford Dam. The Chattahoochee River can change quickly from a serene slow moving river to a swift and treacherous river when water is released at Buford Dam. During a water release the river can rise up to 11 feet within a matter of minutes with the force of over 12,000 cubic feet of water per second,” said Lisa Coghlan, deputy public affairs officer.

“To ensure your safety, it is mandatory that lifejackets be worn between Buford Dam and the GA Hwy 20 bridge for all persons entering the river. There are warning horns along this three mile section of river to indicate when water is being released (downstream of the Hwy 20 bridge, river users cannot hear the warning horns). Exit the river immediately if you hear these warning horns” said Coghlan. Although it is not mandatory to wear lifejackets downstream of the Hwy 20 Bridge, it is highly recommended as the river may rise unexpectedly.

To help plan your trip, call ahead for the water release information at 770- 945-1466. Water release schedules are subject to changes, so when you arrive at the river tune your radio to 1610 AM or call the phone number again for any updated messages regarding water release schedules and river safety messages. “Pay attention to all warning signs posted in the parks and along the riverbanks.

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2-2-2-2 Corps stresses water safety

Remember that it takes time for water releases to move downstream, a helpful chart displaying distance and time, can be found at our website at," <http://lanier.sam.usace.army.mil/WaterSafety.htm> said Coghlan.

Visitors should also be aware of the effects of hypothermia. Waters released at the dam average 44 to 58 degrees year-round. When exposed to these temperatures, exhaustion or unconsciousness can occur in 30 to 60 minutes. Waders are recommended for anyone wading and proper clothing is recommended for anyone tubing or boating.

For more information or questions about river safety call the Corps of Engineers at 770- 945-9531.

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