

November 10, 2020

Dear ELA members,

This past week I met (virtually) with two representatives of the Canal Corporation pertaining to the Eatonbrook dam and the valve operations and maintenance. Donna Isbell, our VP and Jim Cunningham joined me at the meeting. We received a number of answers to the problem and timing for the repairs.

First of all and most importantly we were told that this is "not an emergency condition". It is a maintenance condition issue. Four valves control the dam's lower level discharge. The valves are manually turned open or closed at the top of the control valve house connected by long shafts which extend down roughly over 50 feet to the top of the valves. According to the Canal Corporation representatives we spoke with, one of the four valves is experiencing a "possible shaft to valve connection" problem, leaving the one valve in the same position. The valves are difficult to access for repairs due to the deep depth requiring stringent confined space entry protocols. Typically, the Canal Corporation drains the lake down this time of year with one of the valves opened during the fall and winter months.

The Canal Corporation is currently in the planning stage for this repair before spring 2021 arrives, including getting "confined space entry experts" prepared to enter this deep vault. OSHA has specific safety requirements regarding confined space entry issues. The Canal Corporation has assured us that the valve will be evaluated before Spring 2021.

I know it is hard, but we must be patient. I can assure you that I will continue to maintain a relationship with the NYS Canal Corporation who is the owner of the dam. I cannot stress enough the ownership issue regarding the dam and the only one in a position to make decisions regarding the type of repairs required, and the scheduling of these repairs.

Thank you all for your understanding and support.

Colleen
Colleen B. McSweeney LCSWR
President ELA