



**CITY OF THE DALLES**  
Department of Public Works  
1215 West 1<sup>st</sup> Street  
The Dalles, Oregon 97058

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

**DATE:** June 9, 2022

**TOPIC:** Union Street Underpass Closed

**CONTACT:** City of The Dalles Public Works Department (541) 296-5401

**FOR RELEASE:** IMMEDIATELY

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A combination of snow melt and rain has elevated the Columbia River level and the river has overtopped the banks in some locations. The Union Street Undercrossing will be closed to all traffic at times until further notice due to the high river level, which is causing water at the undercrossing to be deep enough to be hazardous to vehicles, bicyclists and pedestrians.

According to the Corps of Engineers, which operates the dams, the high water level of the Bonneville Pool is necessary for flood control due to recent rain and snow melt.

When necessary, Union Street northbound will be closed to through traffic at the railroad tracks, and will be completely closed north of the Hattenhauer access road (111 West 1<sup>st</sup> Street). Intermittent access to Lewis and Clark Festival Park will be open as river levels allow.

Approaching the undercrossing from the west side, West 1<sup>st</sup> Street will be closed to through traffic at Terminal Way and will be completely closed beyond the employee access to the Oregon Cherry Growers Riverside facility.

Motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians are encouraged to use Webber Street as an alternate route to access West 1<sup>st</sup> Street and the west section of the Riverfront Trail during times the underpass is closed.

This closure may be periodic and sometimes sustained for several days during the spring water runoff times.

Please be alert to traffic control detour signs and for your safety do not enter the road closure area. For more information go to [thedalles.org/transportation](http://thedalles.org/transportation) . If you have questions or concerns, please contact the Public Works Department at (541) 296-5401.

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--See attached flyer--



# Spring Snowmelt

## Minor Street Flooding

Transportation Division

### You Can Monitor the Stream Gage

Closure of the Union Street Undercrossing and access to the City Dock is a normal occurrence during the spring snowmelt season. The trigger for closure is when The Dalles river gage height reaches 83 feet. You can subscribe for river gage notification for USGS [4105700](https://water.usgs.gov/wateralert/subscribe2/index.html?site_no=14105700&type_cd=sw) COLUMBIA RIVER AT THE DALLES, OR

- Set your Streamflow Parameter for Gage Height, in ft
- Set your Alert Threshold Condition at 83 feet

Underlined hyperlink goes to:  
[https://water.usgs.gov/wateralert/subscribe2/index.html?site\\_no=14105700&type\\_cd=sw](https://water.usgs.gov/wateralert/subscribe2/index.html?site_no=14105700&type_cd=sw)

### The Mighty Columbia

The Columbia River is the fourth-largest river in the United States by volume. The Columbia River and its tributaries account for 219,000 square miles of drainage in seven western states that discharges into the Pacific Ocean.

Every spring, snowmelt from the Rocky Mountains, the Cascade Range and the Great Basin causes the river to rise. May or early June is when peak flows usually occur. Several hydroelectric and flood control dams within the watershed store a considerable amount of water.



Sometimes, the dams must discharge much of the water to mitigate floods upstream. Since The Dalles is only 173 miles from the Pacific Ocean and about 100 feet above sea level, in many years some minor street flooding occurs for a few days or weeks each spring.

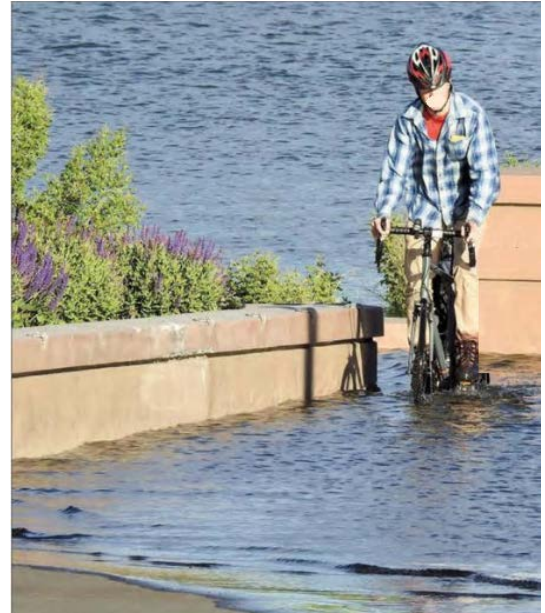
## Flooded Roads Will Be Closed to All Traffic

According to Ready.gov, floods are the most common natural disaster in the United States. In The Dalles, minor street flooding is a common occurrence each spring. The Transportation Division will close flooded streets and bike paths as a safety precaution and to preserve our community investment in road construction.

When flooded road closures are in effect pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists are advised to use alternate routes.

### 6 Reasons to stay out of flood waters

- 1) The road surface is usually very slippery.
- 2) Underwater debris may create a trip hazard for pedestrians or an entanglement hazard for bicyclists.
- 3) Electric service to street lights and the City Dock may not have been turned off yet; there is risk of electrocution.
- 4) Water might unexpectedly vary in depth because curbs may not be visible under murky water.
- 5) Attempting to drive through water may stall your engine with the potential to cause irreparable damage if you try to restart the engine.
- 6) Unseen damage to or failure of the roadway



Travel through floodwaters is tempting but dangerous. For your safety, do not go around road closure signs or barricades. Monitor stream gage levels, plan extra travel time and use alternate routes.

### After flooding the road bed must dry out before the street is re-opened

The road bed becomes super saturated when flooded. A drying period of seven to ten days is typically needed to prevent damage to the road section. On occasion, authorized vehicles accompanied by City personnel will be allowed limited access during the drying period. Finally the street sweeper and other clean-up activities will removed mud and debris left in the roadway once the road can bear the weight of heavy vehicles again. Road closure signs and barricades will be removed when safe passage has been restored.

To view Transportation Division activities visit the City website at [thedalles.org/transportation](http://thedalles.org/transportation) or contact the Public Works office at (541) 296-5401.