<span class="lrgHeadline">ST. CHARLES PARISH OFFICIALS: HELP CLEAR DRAINAGE TO READY FOR HEAVY RAIN</span><br><br>
Forecasts call for up to 20 inches of rainfall in isolated areas. Winds of 25 to 35 mph are also possible, with gusts of 40 to 50 mph, along with tropical funnel clouds or water spouts. Tides are expected to be at least 2 to 4 feet higher than normal.<br><br>
The Department of Public Works, along with Parks and Recreation and various other parish personnel, continue to inspect and clean ditches, catch basins and drainage infrastructure parishwide. Residents are asked to assist by clearing drains and ditches around their homes and reporting any debris piles or blocked culverts to EOC (985) 783-5050. Due to the possibility of strong winds, residents should also take in garbage cans and other items that could blow into drainage ditches.<br><br>
"We've made big strides as far as drainage improvements throughout the parish, with about 3 million gallons per minute in pumping capacity," Parish President V.J. St. Pierre said. "We're going to ensure that rainwater runoff can get to its final outfall."<br><br>
Residents should also have an emergency supply kit stocked with nonperishable food, water and flashlights to be prepared for the possibility of power outages.<br><br>
Sand and sandbags are available for St. Charles Parish residents at the West and East Bank Bridge Parks in Luling and Destrehan. Residents should bring their own shovel to fill bags. Please keep in mind that those living in low-lying areas that have flooded before are most vulnerable to repeat flooding. Additional sandbag locations will be announced today.