

Arizona Department of Water Resources

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NEWS RELEASE



Janet Napolitano,
Governor

Herb Guenther,
Director

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Public Information Office
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ADWR provides dam repair grant to Eastern Arizona College

The Arizona Department of Water Resources announced a grant of up to \$50,000 to assist Eastern Arizona College in Safford in removing an unsafe dam.

Cook Reservoir Dam is located upstream of 12 to 15 homes in the city of Safford. The dam is a non-engineered structure built prior to 1975, in violation of state dam safety statutes. There is no information available regarding its design and construction.

"This is one of the most serious and potentially dangerous hazards among the 251 dams we monitor," said ADWR Director Herb Guenther. "It is fortunate that the college will take on the removal responsibilities." The grant money will come from ADWR's dam safety fund.

Earlier this year, ADWR notified Eastern Arizona College that the dam is in an "unsafe, non-emergency, elevated-risk" condition. During a serious storm, water could build up behind the structure and, in event of failure, result in a flash flood that could pose risks to life and property.

The earthen dam has a crest length of 450 feet and a maximum embankment height of 13 feet. The reservoir will impound approximately 59 acre-feet of water (19 million gallons) at the top of dam. (An acre-foot is 325,851 gallons, enough water for two families for one year.)

ADWR noted deficiencies in spillway capacity, dam stability, an abandoned outlet pipe, and the absence of an adequate emergency action plan.

Eastern Arizona College plans to hire a professional engineer to design alternatives for the safe removal of the dam and present them to ADWR for approval. Dam safety experts at ADWR reported that it would be possible to design a repair/removal plan that would allow low volumes of storm water to pass safely through the area.

For additional information, contact:

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