



LOUISIANA
NATIONAL GUARD
PROTECT WHAT MATTERS™

NEWS Release

For more information contact: Public Affairs Office (866)-275-8176 langpao@ng.army.mil

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 10, 2011

RELEASE #1140

Louisiana Guard rushes to protect city from flood waters

By Sgt. Michael L. Owens
241st Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

NEW ORLEANS – Soldiers of the Louisiana National Guard’s 769th Engineer Battalion are constructing sand-filled basket barriers in Morgan City, beginning May 9, as a precautionary measure to the rising Mississippi River.

Approximately 15 Guardsmen, assigned to the 927th and 928th Sapper Engineer Companies, are conducting the mission of adding three feet of protection to a levee using HESCO baskets to help protect residential areas near Lake Palourde from flooding that could occur if the Morganza Spillway is opened later this week.

“Flood waters may top the levee, so we are adding three more feet to the top of the levee in an attempt to keep water out of this residential neighborhood,” said Staff Sgt. Christopher R. Samson, the non-commissioned officer in charge of the mission.

As of Tuesday afternoon, these Guardsmen had constructed approximately 650 yards of HESCO and approximately 60 percent of them were already filled with sand. The mission is to construct a total of 10,000 feet in this location.

Most of these Guardsmen have much-earned experience with HESCO baskets due to miles of constructed barriers in Grand Isle and Cameron Parish in support of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill response last year.

“These guys are moving fast,” said Samson. “This is a lot of work for a 15-man team, but they are working hard and the experiences they have are showing in their progress.”

Spc. Thomas J. Mahfouz, a combat engineer with the 928th, is from the Morgan City area and was upbeat about this mission.

“This is what being a Citizen-Soldier all is about,” said Mahfouz. “This is where I am from, and this mission gives me a chance to help save my hometown.”

Cutlines:

110510-A-DS601-014, 019, 031

MORGAN CITY, La. – Members of the Louisiana National Guard's 927th and 928th Sapper Engineer Companies are constructing sand-filled HESCO basket barriers on top of a levee along Lake Palourde in Morgan City, La., May 10, 2011. The Guardsmen are adding three feet of protection to the levee as a precautionary measure due to possible flooding caused by the rising Mississippi River. (U.S. Army Photo by Sgt. Michael L. Owens, 241st Mobile Public Affairs Detachment/Released)



