



Find your dream home...



SUBSCRIBE ONLINE
 Times
 MANAGE YOUR ACCOUNT ONLINE

►Local ►Nation/World ►Sports ►Business ►Entertainment ►Living ►Neighborhoods ►Opinion ►Obituaries ►Education ►Military ►Español

Local

- 125 years
- Frontpage.pdf
- Tip line
- Search Archives
- Faces & Places
- Week's Top Photos
- Calendar
- Texas lottery
- New Mexico lottery

News

- Local
- Nation/World
- Sports
- Business
- Entertainment
- Living
- Opinion
- Obituaries
- Neighborhoods
- Education
- Military
- Español

Print Article | Email Article

Article Launched: 08/02/2006 12:00:00 AM MDT

Crumbling roads, debris cause havoc for El Pasoans

Tammy Fonce-Olivas / El Paso Times

Dirt, uprooted desert plants and rocks ranging in size from pebbles to footballs washed onto several streets on Tuesday, creating hazardous driving conditions for motorists trying to get out of the rain.

Among the most dangerous conditions were along North and South Desert boulevards, which had vast sections submerged in water rushing out of overflowing arroyos in far West El Paso, Texas Department of Transportation spokeswoman Blanca Del Valle said.

More than two dozen streets were closed throughout the city and county.

One section of North Desert Boulevard near Vinton even crumbled when the waters eroded the ground underneath it.

"We won't know what the total damage is until the rain has cleared," Del Valle said.

Del Valle said Transportation Department crews were busy Tuesday removing debris from state-maintained highways, such as Trans Mountain Road, and even patching up potholes on other roadways.

"We will get things cleaned up as much as we can," Del Valle said, adding that crews will concentrate on major thoroughfares, such as Interstate 10.

"We don't know if we can get to everything (Tuesday) because of the (continued) rain."

Del Valle said crews would continue to clean up the highways today and begin assessing the damage to roads and their landscaping.

West El Paso resident Eduardo Aguilar said he was looking at the muddy water rushing toward Mesa Street near Thunderbird Drive when he saw a section of a shopping center parking lot collapse, sending Dumpsters and an electrical pole into the water.

Before the rain stopped, the water had carried at least three Dumpsters to Mesa Street. They came to rest near the median.

"This is terrible," Aguilar said.

About five miles of Mesa, from University Avenue near the University of Texas at El Paso to Thunderbird, were flooded and layered with rocks, dirt and desert plants, which once beautified the street's medians.

Other debris, such as discarded beer bottles, cans and even vehicle bumpers, added to the hazardous road conditions.

In South El Paso, most roads south of Paisano Drive and between Stanton and Cotton streets flooded. The water was so deep that it covered the streets and the sidewalks.

In Central El Paso, Gateway West Boulevard from Piedras Street to Downtown were also closed off because of flooding.

In addition to covering streets with water and debris, the rain stalled several street projects throughout the city.

Among the projects affected were Downtown construction, street resurfacing on Boeing and work on medians in the Northeast and Montwood areas.

"What they are doing right now for the Downtown construction project is they are keeping a smaller crew to secure the work zone and the businesses around it," said Julie Baldwin, spokeswoman for city development and engineering services.

Work will resume after rain subsides and construction materials dry.

"The overall (Downtown) initiative is ahead of schedule, so once we start up again, it should be fine," Baldwin said.

Tammy Fonce-Olivas may be reached at tfonce@elpasotimes.com; 546-6362.

El Paso Times reporter Zahira Torres contributed to this story.



Jaime Loya Felipe Banuelos rowed down Gateway West Tuesday as relentless rains flooded the area. Much of the Gateway was closed between Copia and Downtown El Paso.
 Photo gallery: Tuesday's flooding cripples region
 Photo gallery: Storm creates severe flooding
 (Mark Lambie / El Paso Times)

More local stories

- Rio Grande reaches highest level since late '50s
- Crumbling roads, debris cause havoc for El Pasoans
- Emergency calls number in hundreds, Bliss soldiers assist
- TV stations put priority on flood story
- Weathering the storm
- Residents are evacuated in Northeast
- Rain engulfs area, no serious injuries reported
- Drive to work turns scary on North Mesa
- Residents evacuate in Vinton, Sunland
- Most schools in area unscathed by rains

1000
 Shared
WHENEVER
Minutes[®]

JUST
\$49⁹⁹
 a month

UNLIMITED
 in-network calling

T-Mobile
 free phones

Tuesday street closings

- Central El Paso
- Wyoming Drive at the intersections with Dallas, Magnolia, Cotton and Piedras streets.
 - Cotton at Magoffin.

- Gateway East at Missouri. Missouri at Piedras.
 - Alabama at Fort Boulevard closed due to a mudslide.
 - Louisiana at San Jose Drive.
 - Border Highway at Park Road.
 - Border Highway at the Bridge of the Americas.
 - The Delta overpass at the Bridge of the Americas.
 - Border Highway eastbound and being rerouted to Campbell.
 - Dallas and Cotton Exit -- eastbound.
- west side
- Highway 273 at McNutt.
 - North Desert and South Desert from Trans Mountain to Anthony.
 - North Desert at Vinton.
 - Doniphan Drive blocked at Race Track, Sunland Park and Atlantic because of a water main break.
 - Doniphan from Artcraft to Anthony.
 - Doniphan between Vinton and Canutillo.
 - North Mesa between Champion and Alto Mesa; at Sunland Park Drive and at Thunderbird, because of a sinkhole.
 - Mesa Hills by Wallenberg.
 - Executive at Paisano Drive.
 - There was also severe flooding in the Vinton area.
- northeast
- U.S. 54 southbound at Loop 375 westbound exit
 - Dyer at Fairbanks.
 - Sun Valley at Bon Aire.
 - Trans Mountain Road at Alcan and Trans Mountain at Kenworthy.
 - Loop 375 at Bomarc.
 - Loop 375 westbound at Dyer.
 - Arch Bride at North Hampton.
 - Martin Luther King Boulevard southbound at Jon Cunningham to U.S. 54.
- east side
- Eastbound right lane on Montana from Zaragoza to Desert Meadows.
- bridges
- All ports of entry into El Paso.

[RETURN TO TOP](#)

[Own land in North Houston](#)

Build on scenic 1-5 acre homesites, near Sam Houston National Forest

[Ramada - Lubbock, TX](#)

Get our best rate at our site or your first night is free.

[Fort Worth College](#)

Scholarships, Grants, Financial Aid
Get instant access to free aid

[Bond Buyer-Texas Extra](#)

Texas Public Finance News & Analysis from The Bond Buyer

Copyright 2006 by the El Paso Times and MediaNews Group and/or wire services and suppliers.
None of the content on this site may be republished or reused in any way without the written permission of the copyright holder.

[Privacy Policy](#) | [MNG Corporate Site Map](#)