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New York State Canal Corporation Announces Phased Opening of 2025 Navigation Season Due to Impacts of Recent Weather-Related High-Water Event and Emergent Repairs to Canal Infrastructure

Repairs to Movable Dam and Earthen Embankment Underscore Canal System's Age; Unavoidable Impacts from Weather; and the Canal Corporation's Continued Commitment to Safety and Revitalization during Erie Canal's Bicentennial

Photos of High-Water, Damaged Movable Dam, and Earthen Embankment [Here](#)

The New York State Canal Corporation today announced that the New York State Canal system will open in phases beginning Friday, May 16th due to severe weather that has necessitated a delay in the full opening of the waterway on the same day this year. Significant rainfall throughout the end of April and early May created high flows and unsafe conditions along the Eastern and Central Erie Canal, Champlain Canal, and Oswego Canal. As a direct result of those storms, infrastructure along the Erie Canal in the Mohawk Valley sustained damage that must be repaired to ensure safe navigation – an essential part of maintaining the canal's more than 100-year-old infrastructure in 2025.

“The phased opening is about preparing the Canal system for its next century of use while making it safer and more resilient to the impacts of severe weather,” said **New York State Canal Corporation Director Brian U. Stratton**. “We are excited to welcome boaters into the Canal system this year, especially for the Erie Canal's Bicentennial, and we appreciate their patience while we ensure their safety by completing emergent repairs.”

The following sections of the Canal system will open on Friday, May 16, 2025:

- Erie Canal west of Lock E-17 (Little Falls) through Lock E-22 (New London)
- Erie Canal Lock E-28A (Lyons) through Locks E-34/35 (Lockport)

The Erie Canal between Lock E-16 in St. Johnsville and Lock E-17 in Little Falls will remain closed to navigation until further notice. Canal Corporation employees and contractors are performing critical repairs to Canal infrastructure that sustained damage during the recent weather event.

Crews are actively working at two locations just west of Erie Canal Lock E-16. The first location – the Rocky Rift movable dam that regulates the navigation pool in this area – was significantly damaged while being operated to adjust flows during the recent rainstorms. In addition, crews are mitigating a saturated seep along an earthen embankment between the lock and movable dam.

This phased opening of the Canal system and the necessary repairs occurring west of Lock E-16 highlight both the scale and age of New York’s most historic waterway, which continues to serve as a vital corridor for recreation, tourism and economic activity. The current work reflects the priorities of the [Canal Recreationway Plan 2050](#), which outlines long-term goals for resilient infrastructure, responsible stewardship, and public access.

The Canal Corporation anticipates the repairs occurring along the Erie Canal between St. Johnsville and Little Falls will be completed in four to five weeks from today’s date.

Announcements regarding additional openings along the Erie, Champlain, Oswego, and Cayuga-Seneca canals are forthcoming.

The Canal Corporation encourages all mariners and canalside stakeholders to register to receive [Notice to Mariners](#) alerts for the latest information on canal operations.

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About the New York State Canal Corporation

New York’s Canal system includes four historic canals: the Erie, Champlain, Oswego, and Cayuga – Seneca. Spanning 524 miles, the waterway links the Hudson River with the Great Lakes, the Finger Lakes and Lake Champlain. The canals connect hundreds of unique and historic communities across upstate New York.

The New York State Canal Corporation is a subsidiary of the New York Power Authority.

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