

Life on the Lakes

Information About Lakes Hamilton & Catherine

The Battle of the Debris

When the lakes refill this spring, we can plan on seeing a natural increase in the amount of floating debris in the lakes. This results from a combination of two things: First, a natural increase in rainfall during the springtime washes trees, limbs, leaves, and litter into the lakes. Second, the debris that rested on the exposed shoreline during the drawdown will dry out and float as the lake level rises.

This unfortunately, creates floating obstacles in the water and eyesores on the lake that may be present until late spring. The debris tends to travel in large "mats" that move wherever the winds and current take them. The coves on the lake tend to be the biggest victims because debris floats in and doesn't go away. Rest assured it will eventually sink, disperse, or float downstream.

We strongly encourage all lakefront property owners and boaters to do what they can at their properties to prevent debris from getting in the lake in the first place. Please bag and properly dispose of grass and leaf clippings and other debris left on the shoreline in the winter. Remove all or portions of docks that have fallen into disrepair.

As a measure of goodwill, lakefront property owners who are unable to remove large logs can contact Entergy Arkansas for assistance. To qualify, a log must be over 10 inches in diameter and longer than 25 feet. The log also must be located where it can be reached by shore with a truck. To contact Entergy Arkansas to discuss possible debris assistance, call 844-2168.



Start Preparing for Heavy Rain and High Water

Get ready; it looks like it is going to be another wet spring. If you remember during last spring's heavy rains, several docks and other large objects floated free from the shoreline. Some even passed through the open spillway at Remmel Dam.

Unlike Lake Ouachita, lakes Catherine and Hamilton were not designed for flood control, meaning they can take on only a limited amount of water before having to release it downstream. They were built in the '20s and '30s specifically for hydroelectric purposes.

When heavy rains come, lake levels can rise very quickly and Entergy Arkansas, Inc. has no choice but to pass water downstream through the spillway gates to prevent the lake from overtopping the dam. When the spillway gates are open, there can be a very strong current near the dams. Also, heavy rains can cause water levels to rise in the backs of coves and in main tributaries.

To prepare for heavy flows, be sure to anchor your dock to the shoreline with a strong cable or it might just float away! Also, make sure your floating dock or your boat in a fixed dock is able to rise and fall with the lake.

When Entergy Arkansas gets a forecast for potentially flood-producing rains, we may drop the lake by one or two feet just before the storm hits as a precaution. Even this small drawdown can sometimes buy us just a little more time and help us keep the lake from rising to disruptive levels.

Historic lake levels as measured at the dam have exceeded 404 feet above sea level on Lake Hamilton and 317 on Lake Catherine. Fortunately, we have not seen the water this high in some years. But if some of the rainfall that we were forecasted to receive this last spring had actually occurred, we very well could have. And you never know what the future holds. Keep an eye on the forecast, and be sure that all your facilities are secure and well-anchored.



"Cash for Trash Bash"

Cash for Trash Bash is an innovative program that links a great environmental initiative and an opportunity to raise funds for your organization. Registered groups will earn \$5 for each full bag of trash collected from the lakes, up to \$200 per group. In addition, organization members will earn volunteer hours for obtaining college scholarships. Cash for Trash will be held on Saturday, Feb. 21 just before the lakes are refilled. For more information, call 501-623-7871.



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Help Us With Our Mailing List

Please contact Entergy at
 844-2148 or send an e-mail to
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 with any corrections.



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Lakes to Refill - Feb. 22

The spring refill of Lake Hamilton will begin Sunday, February 22. Hamilton will be refilled in two phases. In Phase 1, the lake will refill 4.5 ft from February 22 - March 1. In Phase 2, the lake will refill another 4.5 ft from March 8-15 to reach the normal pool level of 399.7 ft. The one-week break between phases will allow time for moving floating docks back toward the shoreline. Lake Catherine will also refill to normal pool from March 8-15.

Lakes Hamilton and Catherine are annually drawn down in the winter to facilitate shoreline maintenance and inspection and to help control nuisance aquatic vegetation. In addition to facilitating shoreline maintenance and inspection, this year's 9-foot draw-down of Lake Hamilton allowed the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to install a new monitoring system to keep an eye on seepage at Blakely Mountain Dam as part of the overall dam safety program.

Do you know of lakefront property owners who are not receiving this publication? Send their names and addresses to:

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Flow Release Information
www.entergy.com/hydro
 501-844-2125

2009 Refill Schedule

Lake Hamilton (9 feet)

Start Phase 1	Feb. 22	
End Phase 1	Mar. 1	↑ 4.5'
Stable	Mar. 2 - Mar. 7	
Start Phase 2	Mar. 8	
End Phase 2	Mar. 15	↑ 4.5'

Lake Catherine (3 feet)

Start	Mar. 8	
End	Mar. 15	↑ 3'



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Go to www.entergy.com/hydro and subscribe to our Email service. We will be using this to share important news concerning lake related information such as: safety related issues, permitting information, drawdown and refill schedules, generation plans, emergency weather related drawdowns, policy changes and other time sensitive information.