

Arizona dam at risk of failure will be checked by engineers

October 4 2018



The earthen Menagers Dam is in imminent danger of failing, potentially sending floodwaters rushing into the Tohono O'odham village of Ali Chuk, Ariz. on Wednesday, Oct. 3, 2018, southwest of Sells, Ariz. Evacuations had begun Tuesday night after Hurricane Rosa's remnants drenched the western half of Arizona. (Mike Christy/Arizona Daily Star via AP)

A damaged earthen dam holding back a lake swollen by runoff from the remnants of a tropical storm was still at risk of failing Thursday and

inundating a small Native American village near the U.S.-Mexico border, officials said.

The dam suffered "some erosional damage" when it was overtopped by water as the lake behind it grew in size because of [heavy rains](#) that started Tuesday, the National Weather Service said in a statement that extended a flash flood warning until Thursday afternoon for the village of Ali Chuk on the Tohono O'odham Indian Nation reservation.

Tribal officials said in a statement late Wednesday that water levels behind the dam were receding but that its structural integrity was still "a major concern" and that the tribe was working to put together an engineering team to inspect the dam.

Most of Ali Chuk's residents have been evacuated or left on their own but tribal officials said Wednesday that a few refused to leave.

Elsewhere, part of a northern Arizona highway was closed Thursday because of [storm damage](#) after the remnants of Tropical Storm Rosa dumped rain throughout the state.

The northbound lanes of U.S. 89 were closed in the small community of Cameron and southbound lanes were closed at a highway junction north of Cameron, the Arizona Department of Transportation said in a statement.

Repairs will probably require an extended closure, meaning drivers will have to take alternative routes with much longer travel time, the department said.



The earthen Menagers Dam, top left, that was in danger of failing, potentially sending floodwaters rushing into the Tohono O'odham village of Ali Chuk, top right, held steady as the lake behind it receded Wednesday, Oct. 3, 2018, southwest of Sells, Ariz. Evacuations had begun Tuesday night after Hurricane Rosa's remnants drenched the western half of Arizona. (Mike Christy/Arizona Daily Star via AP)



The earthen Menagers Dam that was in imminent danger of failing, potentially sending floodwaters rushing into this Tohono O'odham village of Ali Chuk, has held steady as the lake behind it receded Wednesday, Oct. 3, 2018, southwest of Sells, Ariz. Evacuations had begun Tuesday night after Hurricane Rosa's remnants drenched the western half of Arizona. (Mike Christy/Arizona Daily Star via AP)



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The earthen Menagers Dam that was in imminent danger of failing, potentially sending floodwaters rushing into the Tohono O'odham village of Ali Chuk, has held steady as the lake behind it receded on Wednesday, Oct. 3, 2018, southwest of Sells, Ariz. Evacuations had begun Tuesday night after Hurricane Rosa's remnants drenched the western half of Arizona. (Mike Christy/Arizona Daily Star via AP)



A helicopter flies over floodwaters filling Menagers Lake, where the dam was in imminent danger of failing, potentially sending floodwaters rushing into the Tohono O'odham village of Ali Chuk, but has now held steady as the lake behind it receded Wednesday, Oct. 3, 2018, southwest of Sells, Ariz. Evacuations had begun Tuesday night after Hurricane Rosa's remnants drenched the western half of Arizona. (Mike Christy/Arizona Daily Star via AP)

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