

Mentor still submerged in problems

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It was the same story, different day for Mentor officials.

The majority of residents at Tuesday's City Council meeting came because of continued flooding woes, and the lion's share of the discussion centered on what to do about it.

Following two severe rain events within two days, April 23 and 25, the city received about 120 complaints, the majority related to storm sewer surcharging.

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The first event dropped 1.46 inches in 2½ hours. As a result, several streets were closed, primarily during the early morning hours, including Heisley Road near Diamond Center, Bellflower Road, and Hopkins Road between Hendricks and Markwood. The second rain event produced a total rainfall of 1.39 inches during 10½ hours.

Mentor Engineer Dave Swiger said the city is well above average rainfall for this time of year — 7 inches instead of the average 2.5 inches.

A Chase Drive resident said he and his neighbors have spent about \$60,000 on waterproofing and cleanup in the last five years.

"The houses are almost unmarketable, because you can't sell them with the water issues we're experiencing," he said.

The problems prompted a number of questions and proposals from council members.

Councilman at Large Scott Marn asked that a 10-year-old plan involving detention/retention basins be dusted off. Council President Robert M. Shiner said it would be added to a work session scheduled for 5:30 p.m. May 17.

Ward 3 Councilman Edward R. Walsh asked for permission to form a stormwater committee with Marn and Ward 2 Councilwoman Carolyn Bucey. Shiner gave the OK, but noted that all of council is taking on the issue.

The relentless rain has tested nearly every city department. Fire and public works department heads reported responding to a number of related complaints last week.

In addition, Recreation Department officials are lamenting damage to two soccer fields at Bellflower Park, used by Mentor Soccer Club the weekend of April 24. Officials now are considering how to control field use and labeled the fields unsafe for play until weather permits the parks crew to work on restoring them.

"The fields at Bellflower are shot," said Bob Martin, Parks, Recreation and Public Facilities director. "It's probably going to be June before we'll be able to get the equipment on them to work on them."

The soccer club moved to the Mentor High School stadium, which has turf, to play this past weekend. The club will be invoiced for the total repair to the fields, Martin said.

City administrators are continuing to share information related to flooding with Lake County Department of Utilities. The next meeting between city and county officials is today.