

# Latest repair estimate for Oroville Dam rings in at \$1.1 billion

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OROVILLE — The latest estimate of the cost to rebuild the Oroville Dam spillways is \$1.1 billion, the state Department of Water Resources announced Wednesday.

That's a \$230 million increase from [the last estimate](#) DWR offered in January of \$870 million. The new estimate breaks down to \$160 million for emergency response to the spillway crisis in February 2017 and \$940 million for reconstruction, said Erin Mellon, assistant director of public affairs, in a moderated media call.

Mellon said the cost could go up, as construction work continues.

The department has received 75 percent reimbursement for emergency response costs from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, or FEMA — about \$87 million of \$116 million submitted, she said. DWR plans to request proportional reimbursement of reconstruction costs.

FEMA's maximum rate of reimbursement is 75 percent.

The agency is still reviewing whether it can reimburse the department for the permanent rebuild, Mellon said. [FEMA told north state congressmen](#) a few months ago that it was considering the independent forensic team's report, which found that insufficient maintenance and repairs and systemic failure led to the failure of the spillways in February 2017.

Department officials have said previously that the State Water Contractors would be on the hook for any remaining costs.

## Construction update

Crews continue restoring the energy dissipators at the bottom of the main spillway and placing concrete slabs on the middle and upper chutes.

Jeff Petersen, executive director for lead contractor Kiewit Infrastructure West Co., said that concrete placement in the upper chute was about 63 percent complete, with 50 of 150 erosion-resistant concrete slabs and two of 50 erosion-resistant concrete walls installed.

Mellon said the middle chute was about 77 percent complete and that the energy dissipators, or dentates, were about 45 percent finished.

She said work on the roller-compacted concrete splashpad on the emergency spillway was stalled until Sept. 10 because of scheduled maintenance on a concrete batch plant. A buttress adjacent to the emergency spillway weir and splash pad will be constructed later this year as another means of reducing the risk of dangerous erosion which occurred during the spillway crisis.

The department aims to have all concrete placement on the main spillway done by Nov. 1; however, some work such as clean up and curing will continue. Construction efforts will also be ongoing over at the emergency spillway.