

# Sharjah upgrades drainage network

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## Rain Preparations

Sharjah With the emirate expected to receive seasonal rain soon, officials are optimistic that industrial areas will not be flooded this year given the permanent measures taken to cope with the rainwater.

The industrial areas in Sharjah tend to get flooded on an annual basis. Last year, in particular, many commercial and residential areas in the emirate remained flooded for days causing huge financial losses and inconvenience.

Gulf News spoke to officials of the different municipalities in Dubai, Sharjah and Abu Dhabi to find out about their readiness to cope with the rain.

Hassan Al Taffaq, manager of the Drainage Department at Sharjah Municipality, said that the municipality is equipped to cope with the rain, which is expected to start this weekend.

"There will still be some water in the industrial areas, but things will be better than before because we have upgraded our drainage network. We do not usually have a problem with the network unless Sewa [Sharjah Electricity and Water Authority] do not provide electricity," he said.

"Last year, they had a blackout after a man was electrocuted in the water, so it was impossible for the [drainage] pumps to work. But if there is a blackout this year, we have a back-up plan. We will use a generator to work the pumping station."

Al Taffaq pointed out that the municipality is in the process of finding a temporary solution to the flooding experienced in the areas of Abu Shagara and Cultural Square tunnel, "and we are trying to finalise it".

## Tankers deployed

He added that Sharjah Municipality will also deploy around 80 municipality tankers and is ready to hire private tankers.

Several drainage projects in Sharjah have been carried out, but municipality authorities stressed that their main priority is to minimise water accumulation.

"On Emirates Road, we have already built a drainage network that will remove the water quickly. And the road from the new Shaikh Zayed Bridge towards the border of Dubai has also been put under the responsibility of the Ministry of Public Works. They have also equipped the road with a proper drainage system," Al Taffaq said.

In the opposite direction of Emirates Road that heads towards the border of Ajman, modifications have been made to the drainage network in front of Al Falah Military Camp. A pump to remove all rainwater has been installed.

"We built a semi-underground tank in the city, especially at all the roundabouts so that they will not get flooded. Airport Road was given to two companies to handle the water, and they are responsible for constructing a storm water project in the area of Al Rifa'ah, which will be completed by the end of November," Al Taffaq said.

The storm water project was constructed at a cost of Dh35 million, and will cover the areas of Al Taawun, Buhaira Corniche, Al Mamzar, Central Market, Al Hera, Al Ramsa, Al Shaab Sports Club, Airport Road and Al Ghafia.

The rainwater collected will be diverted for horticulture and agriculture purposes, in addition to any other services that may require water.