

Fourth of July Flood 1969 facts -- based on contemporaneous reports in the Norwalk Reflector

- Heavy rain started around 8 pm Friday July 4, lasted until 5 am July 5 – 9 inches fell in 9 hours.
- There were a couple showers earlier on the Fourth, but it was mostly a beautiful day.
- Flooding initially occurred as a result of Memorial Reservoir overflowing. More than 20 people were evacuated from apartments in area of Benedict Avenue and Water Street on Saturday morning July 5.
- Water was trickling over the Lower Reservoir embankment by 7 am July 5; reservoir dam broke at about 9:30 am.
- Rescuers were in mid-evacuation when reservoir broke. Several were in a city dump truck when the wall of water from the reservoir knocked the vehicle into the railroad gate/signal standard. The railroad apparatus and a high curb combined to keep the vehicle from going further downstream, and kept it upright.
- City owned/operated electric plant was shut down immediately after the reservoir broke. The plant used water directly from Lower Reservoir to cool equipment.
- Local contractors immediately came forward to start repairs of 75-foot gap in the Lower Reservoir Dam. Most steel pilings were in place by Monday July 7.
- Partial water and power services were restored at 6:30 am Tuesday July 8. A portable electrical substation was brought in to tie into the Ohio Edison grid. The Reflector never reported the source of the partial water supply. There were many restrictions of what the water and electricity could be used for.
- The only serious injuries in the city occurred during the height of the storm Friday night. Two boys were in a car when a large tree fell on it. Both were hospitalized. One was left paralyzed.
- City started refilling Lower Reservoir on Thursday July 10.
- Full power and water service restored at about 6:30 am Sunday July 13.