

WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 17, 2007 Last modified: Tuesday, October 16, 2007 11:42 AM CDT

Major mall razing ahead

By Brennan David

Demolition of Hammond Square could begin sometime next week, Stirling Properties Property Manager Dick Cyr said Monday.

Phase One of the renovated mall is on schedule for completion in fall 2008, and project completion is expected in spring 2009.

The mall sprinkler system must be taken out before demolition can commence, Cyr said.

Richard Price Contracting of Denham Springs is installing a new 10-inch water line to allow the separation of the fire suppression system currently being serviced by the water tower and pump at the rear of the property.

The new line will provide proper pressures to service the fire sprinkler systems at the remaining stores - Dillard's, Sears and Rite Aid - during and after demolition.

A new Entergy transformer must also be installed for Rite Aid.

Both projects are expected to be complete by the end of the week, with large demolition equipment arriving sometime next week. "Everything between Rite Aid and Dillard's will be demolished," Cyr said.

Once both projects are complete demolition of the old mall will begin.

The process is estimated to take 60 to 70 days depending on weather conditions as work proceeds.

The process will begin in the rear portion of the mall and work towards the front to not disturb the operations of the remaining stores.

J.C. Penney is still committed to opening its new store Oct. 1, 2008.