

# [Water main burst near Memorial Hall and Frick Center causes major construction on campus](#)

OCTOBER 10, 2017

*By Lauren Vana, Staff Writer*

A water main burst on Saturday, Sept. 23 between Memorial Hall and the Frick Center, causing major construction that blocked off a portion of the road and sidewalk.

The water main lies approximately eight to ten feet beneath the ground. After uncovering the pipe, workers found they needed to replace fifteen feet of pipe. This led to a large construction project that blocked off the entire street and sidewalk outside the Frick Center, according to Executive Director of Facilities Management Bruce Mather.

“It was quite a digging effort,” said Mather. “You’ve got to dig a hole fifteen feet long, ten feet deep, and with workers, it’s got to be wide enough for them to get down and work.”

They worked on the project for several days, and a decision was made to continue working until it was completed. Construction was completed on Friday, September 29.

Though this burst caused construction and blocked an entire entrance to the Frick Center, no other problems were caused in either Memorial Hall or the Frick Center.

“We had a bypass that fed the Frick Center,” said Mather, “so it was a lot of work, but it didn’t shut the building down.”

Prior to this water main issue, the same pipe had burst over the weekend on the east side of Old Main, though it was a significantly smaller problem.

Though the pipes are old, Mather doesn't attribute the burst to their age. "It's not unusual for a water main to be 50, 60, 70, 80 years old," he said.

Rather, Mather believed it was the recent weather that caused the burst.

"It was the fact that it's been so dry, and then it was so hot, that the ground just cracked and moved and took the water main with it," he said.

The facilities management office is having an engineering company evaluate the water mains to decide if more maintenance needs to be done.