



Homeowners of Mountain Spring Take Action to Repair Compromised Road

Kingston, Jamaica, 5 January 2025: Residents of Mountain Spring, Upper St Andrew, have been forced to take matters into their own hands, repairing the embankment of their main road which was on the brink of total collapse.

In early December, residents of a cul-de-sac in the St Andrew neighbourhood discovered a leak in a National Water Commission (NWC) main pipe. The gushing water eroded the soft earth along the road's verge, creating a precarious situation. The residents promptly reported the issue to the NWC and alerted the National Works Agency (NWA) about the urgent need for restoration and preventative maintenance.

Days turned into weeks, but neither agency responded. By 22 December, the inevitable happened—the hillside gave way, leaving the road dangerously compromised. It wasn't until after the collapse that the NWC finally shut off the water. However, the NWC disclaimed responsibility for the road repairs, passing the matter to the NWA. When the NWA eventually visited, they too deflected responsibility, stating it was a local road under the jurisdiction of municipal authorities.

With no government action forthcoming, the residents of Mountain Spring Close—home to 13 houses and approximately 120 residents—took the initiative to prevent further disaster. Concerned about being cut off entirely and the potential threat to nearby homes, they constructed a makeshift barrier using trees and tarpaulin to stabilise the crumbling road edge. But it was clear that more robust action was required.

On 30 December 2024, privately contracted workmen began constructing a 30-foot retaining wall to secure the road and prevent further erosion. A resident described the situation as "slackness," stating: *"We have been calling on the authorities, and nobody is doing anything about the problem. It's not a disaster waiting to happen—the disaster already happened when the hillside washed away, nearly taking the road with it."*



"As the Caretaker, I felt it was my duty to respond to the residents' calls, especially knowing that the MP and relevant authorities seemed to be MIA," said Stacey Knight, PNP constituency caretaker for North East St Andrew. "During the holiday period, I visited the affected homeowners to understand the situation firsthand. I am now issuing a public appeal to the relevant authorities, urging immediate intervention."

The retaining wall, built at residents' expense, highlights the community's resilience but also underscores the systemic failures in public infrastructure management. Knight remains steadfast in her commitment to advocating for the people of Mountain Spring and ensuring their safety and accessibility are prioritised.

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