

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

FEMA-MISSISSIPPI DISASTER NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**RESIDENTS OF 28 MISSISSIPPI COUNTIES URGED TO REGISTER
FOR FEMA-STATE DISASTER AID**

JACKSON, MS. -- State of Mississippi and federal officials encourage residents in the 28 counties who suffered damage or losses from the early April severe storms, tornadoes and flooding to register for disaster assistance as soon as possible.

On April 24, President Bush declared these counties eligible for a wide range of Federal Emergency Management (FEMA) and state programs to help individuals, businesses, and designated local governments recover from the devastation caused by the onslaught of storms that struck the area over the period of April 6-14.

The application phone number is **1-800-621-FEMA (3362)**, or **1-800-462-7585** (TDD) for persons with speech or hearing impairments.

FEMA's Federal Coordinating Officer for the recovery operation, Carlos Mitchell, urged everyone in the counties who suffered disaster-related damage to register immediately. He said, "The process of recovering from this disaster begins only when you call FEMA's toll-free application number."

Mississippi State Coordinating Officer, Leon Shaifer, urged fellow Mississippians who had damage from the April 6-14 severe storms, tornadoes and flooding to call **1-800-621-FEMA (3362)** to register for assistance. "The sooner you register by phone, the sooner your application for assistance will be processed. Operators are available to assist you every day from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. local time, until further notice."

The various programs and services offered by FEMA and the Mississippi State Emergency Management Agency include financial assistance to pay for temporary housing, emergency home repairs and other serious disaster-related expenses. Low-interest disaster loans are available from the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) to cover residential and business losses not fully compensated by insurance.

The 28 Mississippi counties declared eligible for federal and state disaster assistance are Amite, Attala, Claiborne, Clarke, Copiah, Franklin, Hinds, Holmes, Issaquena, Jasper, Jefferson, Kemper, Lauderdale, Laurence, Leake, Lincoln, Madison, Neshoba, Newton, Pike, Rankin, Scott, Simpson, Smith, Walthall, Warren, Wayne and Yazoo.

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