



DISASTER NEWS



MISSISSIPPI EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY -- FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FIVE ADDITIONAL COUNTIES DESIGNATED FOR INDIVIDUAL ASSISTANCE

JACKSON, Miss. December 20, 2001 – Disaster assistance for Grenada, Lafayette, Leake, Scott and Tunica County has been made available to help homeowners, renters and businesses recover from the effects of the recent severe storms, tornadoes and flooding that began November 24, in Mississippi, the head of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) announced today.

FEMA Director Joe M. Allbaugh said the assistance was approved based on a review of damage data gathered by federal, state and local disaster recovery officials. These counties were added for the aid under the major disaster declaration issued by President Bush on December 7, 2001.

“We remain committed to delivering assistance wherever it’s needed and to making sure that every qualified individual and family receives the help they need to get back on the road to recovery,” Allbaugh said.

“I appreciate FEMA Director Joe Allbaugh’s quick response to our request to add additional counties,” said Governor Musgrove. “This addition to the federal disaster declaration means that FEMA’s resources will be available to the state to help the citizens affected by the severe weather, tornadoes and recent flooding recover as quickly as possible.”

Affected residents and business owners in Grenada, Lafayette, Leake, Scott and Tunica counties may now apply for assistance immediately by calling the toll-free registration number, 1-800-621-3362, between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m., Monday through Saturday until further notice. Those with a speech or hearing impairment may call a special TTY number at 1-800-462-7585.

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Allbaugh said calling these numbers is the only way to apply for a wide range of state and federal disaster assistance programs that can include funding for temporary housing, U. S. Small Business Administration (SBA) low-interest loans for individuals and businesses to repair or replace damaged property, disaster unemployment assistance, and grants for serious needs and necessary expenses not met by other programs.

Callers are advised to have the following information available to help speed up the application process:

- Your current phone number.
- Your address at the time of the disaster and the address where you are now staying.
- Your Social Security number, if available.
- A general list of damages and losses you suffered.
- Good directions to the property that was damaged.
- If insured, your insurance policy number, or the agent's and company name.
- General financial information.

The 15 counties eligible for individual disaster assistance are: Bolivar, DeSoto, Grenada, Hinds, Humphreys, Lafayette, Leake, Madison, Panola, Quitman, Scott, Sunflower, Tate, Tunica and Washington.

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