



DISASTER NEWS



MISSISSIPPI EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY -- FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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STATE SCHEDULES BRIEFING TO TATE COUNTY OFFICIALS ON INFRASTRUCTURE ASSISTANCE

JACKSON, Miss. January 15, 2002 -- The process of applying for federal disaster assistance for debris removal, emergency protective measures, and the repair, restoration and replacement of public facilities damaged as a result of the recent severe storms, tornadoes and flooding, will be explained at a briefing for community officials in Tate County.

The briefing will be held at the Tate County Courthouse, 201 South Ward Street (second floor), Courtroom #2 in Senatobia, on Wednesday, January 16, beginning at 1:00 p.m., according to a joint announcement by Leon Shaifer, state coordinating officer for the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency (MEMA), and Gracia Szczech, the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) federal coordinating officer for the disaster recovery effort.

To assist public agencies in applying for funding, Shaifer said the applicant's briefing has been scheduled to brief officials on the procedures to follow when applying for federal disaster assistance in their recovery effort. "The briefing is designed to assist public officials in the process of applying for assistance; it is not designed for individuals seeking assistance. That assistance is provided at the time an applicant registers with FEMA," said Shaifer.

Mississippi initially was declared a disaster area and therefore eligible for state/federal individual assistance by President Bush on December 7. Seventeen Mississippi counties are currently eligible for public assistance. The eligible counties are: Benton, Bolivar, Coahoma, Holmes, Humphreys, Leake, Marshall, Panola, Prentiss, Quitman, Sharkey, Sunflower, Tallahatchie, Tate, Tippah, Tunica and Washington.

With the presidential disaster declaration in place, affected local governments in these counties are eligible to apply for federal assistance to fund 75 percent of the approved costs for debris removal, emergency protective measures, and repairing, restoring or replacing damaged public facilities. The state and the applicant share equally the remaining 25 percent of the approved costs. Disaster assistance also may be provided to repair, restore and replace facilities owned by certain private non-profit organizations that operate and maintain educational, utility, emergency, medical, custodial care and other essential governmental service facilities.

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