

## MISSISSIPPI EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

# NEWS



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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**SUBJECT: Safety Tips After a Flood**

(Jackson) – State emergency officials today remind residents affected by flood waters from the severe thunderstorms to use extreme caution when re-entering damaged property.

“Flood dangers don’t end when the water begins to recede,” said Robert Latham, director of the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency.

**Tips to remember after a flood include:**

- Do not visit disaster areas until you are authorized to do so.
- If you have flood insurance and suffer a loss, notify your insurance agent.
- Tune to radio and television stations for advice and instructions on where to obtain medical care and where to get help for such necessities as housing, clothes and food. Outreach programs will help cope with the stress of the situation.
- Do not enter your home if floodwaters are over the first floor; you cannot tell whether the building is safe to enter.
- Use battery-powered lanterns or flashlights, not oil or gas lanterns or torches, to examine buildings.
- Flooding may have swollen doors tight. When the entrance must be forced because of swollen doors, accumulated mud or bulged floors try to enter through a window or other opening.
- Check with local civil defense or emergency management authorities before using any water. The flood often contaminates water sources. Wells should be pumped out and the water tested by authorities before drinking.
- Do not eat food that has come into contact with floodwaters.

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- Do not handle live electrical equipment in wet areas. Have an expert check all equipment before returning it to service.
  - Ask the gas company to check your home for leaks and to turn the gas back on.
  - If you have a basement that has flooded, pump it out gradually (about one-third of the water per day) to avoid damage. The walls may collapse and the floor may buckle if the basement is pumped out while the surrounding ground is still waterlogged.
  - Report broken utility lines to the authorities.
  - Watch out for poisonous snakes in previously flooded areas.

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