

MISSISSIPPI EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY
MISSISSIPPI OFFICE OF HOMELAND SECURITY



NEWS

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Subject: Meridian/Lauderdale County Regional Response Team Date: May 7, 2003

(Jackson) – Today the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) awarded a \$252,800 grant to the Meridian/Lauderdale County Regional Response Team. The team participants and areas of coverage include: Lauderdale, Newton, Scott, Smith, Jasper, Clarke, and Jones counties.

The money will be used for the purchase of specialized first responder equipment for the Regional Response Team in Meridian/Lauderdale County. MEMA is in the process of developing and equipping 10 statewide teams. The other current Regional Response Teams are located in DeSoto County, Tupelo/Lee County, Hinds County, Hattiesburg/Forrest County, and Harrison County, and Natchez/Adams County.

“The partnership demonstrated by the cities and counties working together exhibits the type of corporation that will be essential in the success of meeting the challenges of a unified response to any type of event,” said Robert Latham, director of MEMA and MS Office of Homeland Security.

The Mississippi Emergency Management Agency received a total of \$5.9 million from the Department of Justice for enhancement of the State’s Domestic Preparedness Strategic Plan, which outlines how MS will allocate Federal funding to address the needs identified through this process. This money is from Federal Fiscal Year 1999 - 2002 and was applied for prior to September 11, 2001. This money is separate from the money that will be received for Homeland Security.

Additional plans for the \$5.9 million include equipping a State HAZMAT Response Team to assist the Regional Response Teams if additional assistance is needed in an event; establish 24 hour warning points in every county to ensure operational information can be passed on to the counties as soon as it is received at the State level; to purchase decontamination equipment for the State; and to address the specific needs of the response to the State Capital Complex in the City of Jackson through the Department of Finance & Administration Capital Police.

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