

STATE JOINT INFORMATION CENTER
HURRICANE ISIDORE INFORMATION
MISSISSIPPI EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

NEWS



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September 27, 2002

5: 30 p.m.

Release #2

The Mississippi Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) is closely monitoring the damage received across the state as a result of the heavy rainfall and winds associated with Tropical Storm Isidore. The following information is being provided to citizens to aid in their safe response to the damage and recovery.

DAMAGE ASSESSMENT TOUR

- Governor Ronnie Musgrove and Mississippi Emergency Management Agency Director Robert Latham toured areas in Harrison and Hancock Counties affected by the storm today (Friday, September 27, 2002). Governor Musgrove also met with FEMA Director Joe Allbaugh in Gulfport and plans to have a request for declaration of a federal disaster on President Bush's desk by Monday afternoon.

ROAD INFORMATION

- The Highway 43 spur in Pearl River County remains closed due to water.
- One lane of the I-220 southbound ramp to I-20 eastbound in the Jackson (Capital City) area is closed.
- All other state-maintained highways are open.

SHELTERS

- The Biloxi Community Center at Howard Avenue, which will serve as a long-term shelter, is the only shelter remaining open. All other shelters are closed.

FLOODING

- Statewide, immediate floodwaters from Tropical Storm Isidore are beginning to recede. State and local officials are continuing to monitor rivers and drainage basins for potential flooding due to run-off.

(more)

"Helping Mississippians in Need is our First Priority"

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STORM-RELATED FATALITIES

Three storm-related fatalities have been reported, one each in Harrison County, in Scott County and in Tunica County.

STORM-RELATED PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORIES

- Boil Water Notices: Boil water alerts due to loss of pressure have been issued for the following water systems: TESI- Jourdan River Shores and Jourdan River Estates in Hancock County and TESI – Rouse Water Co. in Jackson County.
- Mosquito Control: To help control mosquito populations, the public can drain all standing water left in open containers outside the home.
- Floodwater Health Risks: Parents should not allow children to play in floodwater areas or use local beach waters or bayous for recreational purposes until they have been declared safe by authorities. Children should also refrain from playing with floodwater-contaminated toys that have not been disinfected.
- Mold: Since mold can become a problem in homes through sources of indoor moisture such as flooding, people with special concerns about possible allergic reactions to mold (such as respiratory problems, nasal and sinus congestion, eyes burning, sore throat, etc.) should consult a physician if they are having health problems.
- For more information, the public can contact their local county health department or the State Department of Health at 1-800-489-7670 or log onto the public health agency's website at www.msdh.state.ms.us.

STATE EMERGENCY OPERATIONS ACTIVITIES

- The State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) in Jackson has shifted its staffing from the emergency response level to a recovery mode by the end of the business day on Friday, September 27, 2002. A contingent is remaining in the state headquarters over the weekend to continue monitoring local conditions and to assist local officials in damage

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assessment activities. Additionally, most staff at the State Hurricane Support Center in Gulfport will also be redeployed; however, a small contingent remains on the coast over the weekend to help coordinate local disaster assessment. Damage assessment information will be used to identify unmet needs that exceed state and local capabilities and that will require federal assistance to recover. This information will be factored into Governor Ronnie Musgrove's request for a federal declaration of a major disaster.

- The National Guard on the coast is standing down on Friday and is being redeployed to home duty stations except for ongoing local government support activities.

JACKSON COUNTY

- A damage assistance hotline for Jackson County residents whose homes were damaged during Tropical Storm Isidore has been established. Civil Defense/Emergency Manager Todd Adams indicated that residents may call 228-769-7045.