

For Immediate Release
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Governor Musgrove Announces Bio-Terrorism Exercises

(Jackson, MS) – Governor Ronnie Musgrove announced today that the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency will conduct bio-terrorism exercises beginning May 24, 2002. The exercises will assess the current capabilities and support requirements of local responses to terrorism incidents.

“It’s important for us to be prepared for any event, and that’s the goal of these exercises,” Musgrove said. “The Mississippi Emergency Management Agency, as the lead agency for homeland security in the state, is taking active and aggressive measures to ensure the safety and security of our people.”

The exercises are aimed at promoting inter-agency communications, preparedness and an overall team effort. In each exercise, officials from a county and a county seat will respond to a set of circumstances provided by MEMA and Department of Health coordinators. Exercises will consist of a series of five separate hypothetical incidents in which officials will discuss their response as well as any issues or problems that may arise.

MEMA officials are focusing on several objectives, including implementation of the Incident Command System; interfacing among local, state and federal agencies; need for training and equipment; medical capabilities; and public information.

A total of ten exercises are scheduled through the end of the year. Exercises were planned with support from the Mississippi State University Extension Service Center for Governmental Technology. Dates and locations are as follows:

May 24	Starkville	October 9	Raymond
June 13	Tunica	October 23	Cleveland
July 10	Meridian	November 6	Natchez
August 14	Verona	November 13	Hattiesburg
August 28	Grenada	December 11	Orange Grove

A briefing will be held for media at 10:00 a.m. on May 24 in Starkville. The briefing will take place in the Bost Extension Center located on the MSU campus.

For additional information, contact Amy Bissell with MEMA at 960-9039.

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