

Office of the Governor/MDA/MEMA
CDBG/Safe Rooms
Press Conference
Monday, March 26, 2001
10:00 a.m.

- Mississippi has been ravaged by severe weather within the past month.
- Thunderstorms, tornadoes, hail and straight-line winds have affected almost every area of the state.
- Hundreds of individuals and families have been displaced and their lives have been disrupted by the destruction.
- The Mississippi Emergency Management Agency was on site with each storm to begin giving immediate disaster relief.
- They responded quickly to the needs of all of our people, getting damage assessments completed and providing our people with the assistance they need to quickly return their lives to normal.
- Prevention is the key to surviving any disaster, and

- MEMA has been working tirelessly to make our communities safer by educating people to storm warning signs and working with local emergency management officials to make our cities across Mississippi disaster-proof.
- Today, I am pleased to announce that the Mississippi Development Authority is joining the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency's efforts to build residential and community safe rooms and storm shelters that will help protect our citizens from tornadoes and other high winds.
- MDA is providing up to \$150,000 of Community Development Block Grant funds to assist with the construction of safe rooms or storm shelters for housing that is being reconstructed due to storm damage.
- J. C. Burns, Executive Director of MDA is here to talk about their assistance with this safety initiative.
- (J. C. talks)

- Robert Latham, Executive Director of MEMA is here to talk about the Safe Room Program.
- (Robert talks)
- Robert, I would like to thank and commend you and your staff for the tireless efforts you have given to the storm relief efforts across Mississippi.
- The good work of the MEMA staff has made a positive difference in the lives of our people, and the safe room initiative is one more way we are making Mississippi a safer place for our people to live, work and raise their families.
- I want to recognize the partnership that has been established between MDA and MEMA to enhance this initiative.
- As separate entities, both MDA and MEMA are working to make a better Mississippi.
- But by creating this partnership and working together, they are making a stronger, more effective impact on the safety of our people's lives.

- The safety of our people is of the utmost importance, which makes this effort even more important.
- Rebuilding, cleanup and healing continues in these counties, and
- Mississippians have proven, once again, that they are resilient, and with all of us working together, our people's lives and communities are becoming strong again.
- We would be glad to take any questions you might have at this time.