



State Emergency Operations Center

Joint Information Center

CONTACT: (866) 920-MEMA (6362)

CONTACT: Office of Communications, 601-576-7667

Note to media: After hours or during emergencies, call 1-866-HLTHY4U (1-866-458-4948)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 10, 2011

Health department responds to flooding disaster

PEARL, Miss. -- The Mississippi State Department of Health is working with the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency and the federal government to monitor the Mississippi River flooding and the impact it will have on the citizens of Mississippi.

- MSDH Emergency Response Coordinators are working with county emergency management agencies and local governments on evacuation plans for areas projected to be flooded.
- MSDH is assisting nursing homes, personal care homes, and hospitals with evacuation and other needs.
- MSDH environmentalists are working with restaurants in the affected areas to make sure they are aware of the protocol for re-opening.
- The Mississippi Public Health Laboratory is testing water samples in the impacted areas.
- MSDH County Environmentalists are inspecting open shelters and providing technical assistance.
- An MSDH Advanced Planning Unit is developing patient evacuation and medical shelter plans, and determining the need for federal resources.
- MSDH has formed a Healthcare Flood Impact Task Force made up of 35 Mississippi state agencies and healthcare associations, including representation for MSDH licensed facilities and hospitals, to assess potential flood impact and to review and coordinate plans to lessen the impact on the Mississippi healthcare system.

MSDH also advises residents affected by the flood to be aware of the following important information:

Women, Infants and Children Nutritional Program (WIC)

- WIC services are available at alternate locations to residents affected by the flood who are currently on or are eligible for the program.
- For information on where you can receive WIC services, contact the county health department in the area where you are currently relocated.
- Visit www.HealthyMS.com for a list of county health departments and their contact information.

- more -

“Disaster Preparedness Saves Lives and Property.”

msema.org

Tetanus

People in flooded areas may be at risk for tetanus, a bacterium that can enter the body through a wound. A tetanus vaccination, along with proper first aid, can prevent infection.

- Clean any puncture wound contaminated by dirt or flood water.
- Consult a healthcare provider to determine whether a tetanus booster is needed.
- People who received standard childhood immunizations, and have had a tetanus booster in the last ten years, do not need the vaccination.

For more information on preparing for the flood, visit www.HealthyMS.com.

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