



MISSISSIPPI EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

NEWS RELEASE

CONTACT: 866- 920-MEMA

Media Contact
866-920-MEMA (6362)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

2:30 p.m. June 2, 2011

SAFE ROOM GRANTS AVAILABLE FOR STORM IMPACTED COUNTIES

PEARL, Miss.—The Mississippi Emergency Management Agency is now accepting applications for its “A Safe Place to Go Program” to provide homeowners with grant funds to help install a safe room.

Through the program, the state can reimburse up to 75 percent of the eligible costs not to exceed \$4,000 for a single-family safe room. The grant program is made available through FEMA’s Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funds that are administered by MEMA.

A safe room is an interior shelter in a small, windowless room that is easily accessible for an entire family. Safe rooms may be built into a home or placed below ground.

Residents affected by tornadoes and severe storms that struck the following counties between April 15 and April 28 may apply for the reimbursement program: Alcorn, Attala, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Clarke, Clay, Coahoma, DeSoto, Greene, Grenada, Hinds, Holmes, Jasper, Kemper, Lafayette, Leflore, Marshall, Monroe, Montgomery, Neshoba, Newton, Panola, Quitman, Smith, Sunflower, Tishomingo, Tunica, Webster and Winston. Priority to participate and receive funding will be given to those whose homes were damaged or destroyed.

MEMA has contacted homeowners whose homes were destroyed to make sure these individuals know to apply. MEMA will also take applications in person from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., today through Saturday, June 4 at the Disaster Recovery Center located at the Government Complex Building, 1619 Highland Drive, Amory. Homeowners with internet access are encouraged to apply by visiting www.msema.org and clicking the “safe rooms” link. Free Internet access is also available at most public libraries.

“This tornado season has opened the eyes of a lot our residents to the importance of having a safe room in their home,” said MEMA Director Mike Womack. “We hope people take advantage of this opportunity to help protect themselves from future storms.”

To qualify for reimbursements, the safe room/shelter must be constructed according to FEMA’s design plans and construction criteria. Details are available at www.fema.gov. Homeowners must apply with MEMA and be accepted to the reimbursement program before beginning construction.

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Mississippi originally launched the safe room program in 2001 after a series of tornadoes and severe weather killed eight people and injured more than 100 others.

Since 2001, more than 6,200 Mississippians have been able to install a storm shelter or safe room in their homes thanks to the “A Safe Place to Go Program.”

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