



# State Emergency Operations Center

## Joint Information Center

CONTACT: (866) 920-MEMA (6362)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 6, 2011

### **Health Department Urges Residents to Take Flood Precautions**

The Mississippi State Department of Health recommends residents in flood warning zones take the following safety precautions:

- Plan a flood evacuation route with your family. Ask an out-of-state relative or friend or someone in an unaffected part of the state to be the "family contact" in case your family is separated during a flood. Make sure everyone in your family knows the name, address and phone number of this contact person.
- Identify potential home hazards and know how to secure or protect them before the flood strikes. Be prepared to turn off electrical power if there are fallen power lines or standing water, or before you evacuate.

#### **If you are under a flood watch or warning:**

- Gather emergency supplies and stay tuned to local radio or television stations for updates.
- Locate your main power switch and main gas and water valves so they can be quickly turned off in case of evacuation.
- If you are remaining in your home, fill bathtubs, sinks and plastic soda bottles with clean water. Sanitize the sinks and tubs first by using bleach. Rinse and fill with clean water.
- Bring outdoor possessions such as lawn furniture, grills and trash cans inside or tie them down securely.
- Prepare at least a 60-day supply of any essential medications to take with you.

#### **If you are ordered to evacuate:**

You should never ignore an evacuation order. If a flood warning is issued for your area or you are directed by authorities to evacuate:

- Take only essential items with you.
- Take at least a 60-day supply of all of your essential medications with you.
- If you have time, turn off the gas, electricity and water.
- Disconnect appliances to prevent electrical shock when power is restored.
- Follow the designated evacuation routes and expect heavy traffic.
- Do not attempt to drive or walk across creeks or flooded roads.

#### **Home emergency supplies:**

You should stock your home with supplies that may be needed during the emergency period. At a minimum, these supplies should include:

-more-

“Disaster Preparedness Saves Lives and Property.”

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- Several clean containers for water, large enough for a three to five day supply of water (about five gallons for each person).
- A three to five day supply of non-perishable food and a non-electric can opener.
- A first aid kit, prescription medicines, and special medical supplies.
- A battery-powered radio, flashlights and extra batteries.
- Sleeping bags or extra blankets.
- Water-purifying supplies, such as chlorine or iodine tablets or unscented, ordinary household chlorine bleach.
- Baby food and/or prepared formula, diapers, and other baby supplies.
- Disposable cleaning cloths, such as "baby wipes" for the whole family to use in case bathing facilities are not available.
- Personal hygiene supplies, such as soap, toothpaste, sanitary napkins, etc.
- An emergency kit for your car with food, flares, booster cables, maps, tools, a first aid kit, fire extinguisher, sleeping bags, etc.
- Rubber boots, sturdy shoes and waterproof gloves.
- Insect repellent containing DEET or Picaridin, screens, and long-sleeved and long-legged clothing for protection from mosquitoes, which may gather in pooled water remaining after the flood. More information about these and other recommended repellents can be found at [www.HealthyMS.com/westnile](http://www.HealthyMS.com/westnile).

### **Immunizations information for individuals impacted by flood waters:**

Tetanus vaccination is recommended if it's been 10 years or more since the last tetanus vaccination (Tdap is the recommended vaccine). In the event of a puncture wound or wound contaminated with flood waters, individuals should consult with a healthcare provider. There is no indication for Hepatitis A vaccine.

For more information on preparing for the flood, visit [www.HealthyMS.com](http://www.HealthyMS.com).

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