



MISSISSIPPI EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MISSISSIPPI HELPS EAST COAST PREPARE FOR IRENE

PEARL—States along the east coast are bracing for impact from Hurricane Irene, and Mississippi Emergency Management Agency Director of Response Tom McAllister is in Washington D.C. to help direct national response efforts.

McAllister has been called in to the National Response Coordination Center at the Washington D.C. headquarters of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to help coordinate mutual aid resources for states in Irene's path.

All 50 states and many U.S. territories can assist each other during disasters through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact. This agreement allows states not directly impacted by a disaster to send staff and resources to other states that may need additional support during a large scale emergency.

McAllister will be responsible for making sure states impacted by Irene have the manpower and resources to conduct response efforts in critical areas like search and rescue, communications and sheltering. McAllister represents the states in FEMA Region IV: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee.

"My job in this disaster is to make sure states engaged in the emergency have resources available prior to landfall," McAllister said. "If a state is stretched thin in an area, we reach out to other states to bring in the resources they need so response and recovery efforts can continue."

McAllister was called to his current assignment as a result of his service on the EMAC Executive Task Force with the National Emergency Management Association. The multi-state task force works throughout the year to ensure that emergency managers throughout the country are trained and ready to mobilize to other states when needed.

Mississippi is no stranger to receiving support from other states through assistance agreements. Following Hurricane Katrina in 2005, multiple states deployed aid to the Gulf Coast, sending law enforcement personnel, generators and other badly-needed resources.

"Mississippi is grateful for the support we receive from other states during disasters, and we are always glad to aid other states when we can," said MEMA Director Mike Womack. "Mutual aid agreements are an important part of making sure all areas of the nation can respond to disasters, and assisting other states is often a very good learning opportunity."

McAllister will be in Washington D.C. for 14 days and may return to provide further assistance.

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