



MISSISSIPPI EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MEMA Director Urges Preparedness on Hurricane Katrina Anniversary

PEARL – Six years ago Hurricane Katrina devastated the Mississippi Gulf Coast with 135 mph winds and up to 30 foot storm surges that killed 238 people. Today the recovery and rebuilding process continues for many Mississippians. Mississippi Emergency Management Agency Director Mike Womack is asking residents to make sure they are prepared for the next storm as they remember Katrina.

“The first thing people need is a plan to know if they will need to evacuate their home and where they will go” said Womack. “Saving lives is our top priority. We can rebuild homes but we can’t bring back those that lose their lives.”

MEMA recommends everyone to have the following three things:

1. Develop and Review a Family Evacuation Plan:

Contact your local emergency management director to learn of your community's emergency plan, location of shelters and hospitals, evacuation routes and emergency warning system. If an incident occurs, listen to local radio or television stations and follow the instructions of emergency officials. Evacuate immediately, if told to do so.

2. Develop and review a Family Communications Plan:

This will give assurances that all are safe and enable you to make plans to get back together. Ask an out-of-state friend or relative to serve as the family contact. After a disaster, it is often easier to call long distance, outside of the disaster area. Make sure all family members know the name, address and telephone numbers of the contact person.

3. Develop and maintain a current Family Disaster Supply Kit:

A Disaster Supply Kit should consist of the materials your family would need to survive for at least three days without power. The kit should include: non-perishable food, water (at least one gallon per person, per day), a first aid kit with prescription medicines, a battery-powered radio, a NOAA weather radio, flashlights with extra batteries, specialty items necessary for babies or elderly, pet care items, blankets and pillows, toiletries, vehicles with full fuel tanks and an amount of cash, in case banks or ATMs are not available.

There have been 10 named storms already this season, with Hurricane Irene killing at least 23 people after striking the Bahamas and the U.S. East Coast. There are three months remaining in this hurricane season and forecasters expect the Atlantic basin to remain very active.

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