



MISSISSIPPI EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY
NEWS RELEASE
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Oxford Receives Grant to Build New Emergency Operations Center

PEARL—The Mississippi Emergency Management Agency announced that the Oxford Emergency Management Agency has been awarded a \$750,000 grant from FEMA to build a new Emergency Operations Center in Oxford. The project is estimated to take about 18 months to complete and should be finished in the summer of 2013.

The grant was awarded through a competitive process based on how well applicants addressed state-identified priorities, quality of justification and pre-existing planning. FEMA selected Oxford and Onslow County in North Carolina as recipients of this year's grant awards in this region.

"We are so pleased that a Mississippi city received this very competitive grant," said MEMA Director Mike Womack. "Having an adequate facility will allow Oxford to better protect its citizens because the local emergency managers will have the tools to coordinate more efficiently with partner agencies during an emergency."

The new center will serve as a warning point for the area and will provide ample space for other local and state agencies to stage personnel during emergencies. An emergency communications center and real time information technology resources will also aid local officials when managing an emergency.

"We are honored to be designated for this grant, especially in a time of limited funding," said Oxford Emergency Management Agency Director Jimmy Allgood. "Having this facility will definitely put our area on the right track toward being better prepared to respond to emergencies."

Lafayette County Emergency Management Agency Director David Shaw says he is looking forward to working more closely with Allgood and the city of Oxford to coordinate emergency response for the area. Officials at the University of Mississippi will also use the facility as a staging area for security and law enforcement during large events.

The center will be built to FEMA 361 standards to withstand winds of 200 mph and will be located in a low hazard risk area near the Oxford Electric Department. The facility will have emergency power and water supplies, protective shutters, load bearing walls and roofing. Due to Mississippi's proximity to the New Madrid Seismic Zone, the facility will also be constructed to resist ground movement and will include automatic seismic shutoff valves to gas lines.

The total proposed cost of the project is \$937,500 and includes a 25 percent grant match of \$200,000 provided by the grant recipient. Portions of the match will come as in kind funds:

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- City of Oxford Engineering Department—will provide design engineering, construction engineering and inspections valued at \$112,500.
- Oxford Electric Department—provided land for the facility and parcel improvements valued at \$75,000.
- University of Mississippi Information Technology department—will provide \$12,000 in labor to wire the new facility for technology.

Through the grant program, FEMA can award up to \$1 million for the construction of a new emergency operations center or up to \$250,000 for renovations to an existing facility.

Port Gibson and Neshoba County received grant awards from the same program in 2010 and are working toward completion of their emergency operations facilities.

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