



MISSISSIPPI EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Feb. 25, 2011

SEVERE WEATHER AWARENESS: FLOODING

PEARL – Flooding is often a threat during severe weather events in Mississippi. Mississippi ranks eighth in the nation for the number of repetitive loss structures and has more than 30 million acres classified as flood plain.

As little as six inches of moving water can knock pedestrians off their feet. A foot of water will float moving vehicles, and two feet of rushing water can carry away most vehicles including sport utility vehicles and pick-up trucks.

Take these steps now before a flood occurs:

- Purchase flood insurance. You can obtain flood insurance through your insurance company.
- Take photographs or videos of all your important possessions. If a flood damages your home, these items will help you file your flood insurance claim.
- Store important documents and irreplaceable personal objects where they won't be damaged. If a major flood is expected, consider putting these items in storage facility.
- Plan and practice a flood evacuation route with your family.
- Buy and install a sump pump with backup power.
- Have an electrician raise electric components such as sockets, switches and circuit breakers at least 12 inches above your home's projected flood elevation.
- Install backflow valves or plugs for your drains, toilets and sewer connections.
- Anchor fuel tanks so they will not be torn free by floodwaters.

Take these steps if floodwaters are rising:

- Fill sinks, bathtubs and jugs with clean water in case water becomes contaminated.
- Listen to a battery-operated radio for the latest storm information.
- Local authorities may instruct you to turn off all utilities and close your main gas valve.
- If told to evacuate your home, do so immediately.
- If water starts to rise inside your house before you evacuate, retreat to the second floor, attic or your roof if necessary.
- If you come in contact with floodwater, wash your hands with soap and disinfected water. Floodwater may carry raw sewage, chemical waste and other infectious substances.
- Avoid walking through floodwater.
- Don't drive through a flooded area or an area that has rising water.
- Avoid downed power lines because electric currents pass easily through water.
- Look out for animals, especially snakes. Animals lose their homes in floods too.

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"Disaster Preparedness Saves Lives and Property"

Visit us online at www.msema.org

Governor Haley Barbour declared Feb. 21- 25 as Severe Weather Awareness Week in Mississippi.

For more information, contact MEMA External Affairs at 866-920-MEMA (6362), or visit us online at www.msema.org.

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