THE MEMA MINUTE

Mississippi Emergency Management Agency's Monthly Newsletter

2022 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

January marks the start of the Mississippi Legislative Session, where state lawmakers gather to pass budgets and other important legislation. MEMA, just like other agencies, is busy working on getting our budget passed as well as Next Generation 911 (NG 911) legislation.

MEMA's Chief Financial Officer, Crystal Thompson, plays an integral role in getting a working budget for the agency. This year MEMA is asking for an additional $514,223 to cover salaries, increase in travel, and the drone program. MEMA is requesting $10 million for the Disaster Trust Fund to cover county and municipal matches and to continue the Disaster Assistance Repair Program (DARP). Along with general funds from the legislature, the agency also requests nearly $13 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. These monies would go towards increasing salaries, the disaster reservist program, and maintaining the State Emergency Logistical Operational Center.

To assist the agency in the Legislature, MEMA has hired Neal Ricks as Legislative Liaison.

NEXT GENERATION 911
FOR MISSISSIPPI

BRINGING FIRST RESPONSE INTO THE 21ST CENTURY

- INCREASES PUBLIC SAFETY BY STREAMLINING EMERGENGY COMMUNICATIONS
- UPGRADES ALL OF MISSISSIPPI'S OUTDATED 911 INFRASTRUCTURE
- ALLOWS THOSE IN NEED OF HELP TO TEXT, CALL OR VIDEO CHAT WITH 911 TELECOMMUNICATORS, AS WELL AS SEND PHOTOS AND VIDEOS
- PROVIDES REAL-TIME LOCATION TRACKER TO DISPATCHERS AND FIRST RESPONDERS
- HELPS DISPATCHERS DETERMINE WHO TO SEND TO ASSIST CALLERS
- IMPROVES CALLER OUTCOMES BY PROVIDING FIRST RESPONDERS WITH ADDITIONAL INFORMATION TO HELP RESPOND FASTER AND MORE EFFECTIVELY
- INCREASES SAFETY FOR FIRST RESPONDERS, WHO WILL BE BETTER EQUIPPED TO HANDLE ANY SITUATION WITH THE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION PROVIDED
- GIVES NON-AFFECTED PSAPS (PUBLIC SAFETY ANSWERING POINTS) THE ABILITY TO BACK UP AFFECTED AREAS AND IMPROVE RESPONSE EFFICIENCY

Along with our budget, MEMA is working on getting Next Generation 911 legislation passed in Senate Bill 2531 (could change as legislation evolves). MEMA would be leading the way in bringing the state's 911 system into the 21st Century. This bill would allow for upgrading all of Mississippi's outdated 911 infrastructure. Not only that, those in need of help can text, call, or video chat with 911 telecommunicators.

As we enter the spring severe weather season, there's lots of work happening behind the scenes that many won't see. "We are working to be a competitive agency when it comes to salaries so we can keep a talented workforce and continue to serve Mississippians," says Executive Director Stephen McCraney. "While none of these dollar figures or legislation are guaranteed, I want MEMA to know we are working very hard to advocate for you," says CFO Thompson.

Employee of the Month
DAWN SPEARS

Dawn is the Project Officer for the Office of Public Assistance on the Coast. Dawn's hard work and initiative on a daily basis are essential to the overall success of MEMA's Office of Public Assistance. She is extremely organized and has worked to improve the Public Assistance reporting system through a project tracking spreadsheet. Dawn continues to push the envelope each and every day. Thank you for all that you do, Dawn! Congratulations!

DISTRICT 5 QUARTERLY MEETING

Members of the MEMA team traveled to Raymond to meet with District 5 Emergency Management Directors. Topics discussed included upcoming changes to EMPG standards and the use of Crisis Track for Public Assistance damage reporting. State Coordinating Officer, Todd DeMuth, also talked about the benefits of Long Term Recovery Committees and DARP.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

✓ FEBRUARY 14-19
Spring Severe Weather Preparedness Week

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Severe T-Storms	Flooding	Tornadoes	Lightning	Warning Reception	Mobile Home Safety

✓ FEBRUARY 24
Presidents' Day - OFFICES CLOSED