



# DISASTER NEWS



MISSISSIPPI EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY -- FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## MISSISSIPPIANS HAVE RECEIVED MORE THAN \$9 MILLION IN DISASTER AID; 2,439 HAVE APPLIED FOR ASSISTANCE

**JACKSON, Miss.** January 31, 2002 – With the February 5<sup>th</sup> deadline to apply for federal and state disaster assistance approaching, 2,439 Mississippians have already received \$9,024,587 in disaster aid as a result of President Bush's disaster declaration on December 7, 2001. The presidential declaration was in response to a request by Gov. Ronnie Musgrove.

Residents of the 17 eligible counties should call **1-800-621-3362** to apply for assistance. The declared counties are: Bolivar, Coahoma, DeSoto, Grenada, Hinds, Humphreys, Lafayette, Leake, Madison, Panola, Quitman, Scott, Sunflower, Tallahatchie, Tate, Tunica and Washington.

MEMA, the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency, has approved Individual and Family Grant checks to 578 families totaling \$1,574,856, while \$1,664,831 in disaster housing assistance checks was sent to 1,218 families. The U. S. Small Business Administration (SBA) has approved 111 low interest disaster recovery loans for a total of \$5,784,900.

Mississippi's coordinating officer for disaster recovery, Leon Shaifer, said, "We are pleased with the way Mississippians who need assistance have applied so far. This is your federal and state tax dollars at work for you, and at a time when it's really needed. If there are any residents who sustained damage **during the November 24 through December 17, 2001, severe weather period** and who have not yet applied for assistance should do so immediately. The deadline is almost upon us. All it takes is one free phone call to **1-800-621-3362**. If you have a hearing or speech impairment, then call **TTY 1-800-462-7585**."

Individuals, families and business owners who reside in the designated counties and who sustained disaster losses during the declared severe weather period, are eligible for a wide range of disaster assistance programs.

Gracia Szczech, the Federal Emergency Management Agency's official in charge of the recovery effort, added, "Don't delay if you think you may be eligible for assistance. If you were uninsured or underinsured and suffered storm damage during the November 24 through December 17 period, and have not registered yet for assistance, the time to do so is now. There are only five days left to apply."

The number of applications received by county to date are: Bolivar, 202; Coahoma, 80; DeSoto, 149; Grenada, 8; Hinds, 5; Humphreys, 292; Lafayette, 20; Leake, 9; Madison, 119; Panola, 242; Quitman, 491; Scott, 4; Sunflower, 188; Tallahatchie, 240; Tate, 28; Tunica, 56; and Washington, 306.

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