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Disaster News



Mississippi Emergency Management Agency – Federal Emergency Management Agency

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FEMA-DR-1443-MS-NR47

Date: December 7, 2002

MEDIA CONTACTS: MEMA - 601-960-9039 or 601-953-3622
FEMA - 662-329-7570

To Date: Statistics for November's Tornadoes

COLUMBUS, MS – One month after severe storms and tornadoes swept through six Mississippi counties in November, residents and business owners continue rebuilding their lives and helping one another.

State, federal, local and voluntary agencies are working in partnership to help Mississippians with the recovery process. Following is a summary of ongoing response and recovery efforts as of close of business, Friday, December 6, 2002, from Mississippi Emergency Management Agency (MEMA), Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA):

- More than **\$4.1 million** in disaster assistance has been approved to people in the six counties affected by the tornadoes.
- To date, more than **1,226** individuals and business owners have registered for assistance through FEMA's toll-free registration line; individual and households assisted: **627** owners and **528** renters.
- **875** individuals have visited the Disaster Recovery Centers for information and assistance.
- More than **\$444,000** has been approved for disaster housing assistance and more than **\$1,014,000** approved for other needs, such as medical, dental, personal property, transportation, clothing, household items, furnishings. Inspectors have completed **717** inspections of tornado-damaged structures and are **98** percent completed.
- The U.S. Small Business Administration has approved **\$1,177,200** in disaster loans and issued **442** home and **176** business loan applications.
- State and federal share for Public Assistance has reached **\$1,482,936**.
- The Interdenominational Alliance of Ministers has distributed more than **\$14,000** to more than **2,000** households, food to **1,303** households and clothing to **396** households.
- The American Red Cross deployed **344** workers to the Columbus disaster, distributed **149,453** meals and snacks, sheltered 58 guests and has given **\$32,957** for temporary housing.

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- The Salvation Army has had **124** volunteers and staff involved in relief efforts with more than **8,000** volunteer hours of service, provided **2,050** families with groceries, given out **22,800** items of clothing, distributed **850** clean-up kits and served more than **52,000** meals from six mobile kitchens.
- The Golden Triangle Community Agencies Recovery Efforts (GT CAREs), a Lowndes County long-term recovery interfaith organization, will be available to those in the county who have been affected by the disaster and who have unmet needs after they have exhausted federal, state and local volunteer organizational assistance. The agency is recruiting volunteers for caseworkers, home rebuilding and fund raising. Anticipated costs include **\$750,000** for rebuilding homes, **\$300,000** for repairing homes and **\$100,000** for demolition and debris removal.
- **38,703** cubic yards of debris have been hauled to the City landfill – that's more than **1,600** 18-wheeler dump truck loads.

A Disaster Recovery Center (DRC) is available for those who were affected by the disaster through Tuesday, December 17 in former Lowe's Home Supply at 2320 Highway 45 North in Columbus. The DRC is open from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Saturday.

Even though the DRC will close December 17, help is as close as the telephone. The FEMA toll-free Helpline is **800-621-3362** or for the hearing and speech impaired, TTY, **800-462-7585**.