

March 9, 2001

TO: County Emergency Management Directors
FROM: Robert R. Latham, Jr., Executive Director
RE: "A Safe Place to Go" Initiative

Hazard Mitigation Grant funds are being made available to those counties declared in the recent Tornado/Damaging Wind Disaster (FEMA-1360-DR-MS). The grant funds can be used to construct/install community or individual safe room or storm shelters.

The State priority is to first make the grant funds available to homeowners, businesses, government installations and private non-profit corporations that sustained damage to their facilities. Our second priority is to offer the grants to those within the declared areas that did not sustain damage.

Those counties that are not declared within FEMA 1360-DR-MS are encouraged to construct safe rooms and community shelters if desired, however, the Hazard Mitigation Grant funds are not available to these counties.

Below is a list of declared counties. If your county is not on this list, and you receive calls from homeowners interested in building a safe room, please inform them that the Hazard Mitigation Grant funds will not be available. Those counties that are declared receive top priority, and it is these counties that we will work with in appropriating funds, rebuilding and uplifting those who have been directly affected by our recent storms.

Alcorn, Attala, Bolivar, Calhoun, Carroll, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Clay, Coahoma, Grenada, Holmes, Humphreys, Ittawamba, Lafayette, Lee, Leflore, Lowndes, Madison, Monroe, Noxubee, Oktibbeha, Panola, Pontotoc, Prentiss, Quitman, Sunflower, Tallahatchie, Tippah, Tishomingo, Union, Washington, Webster, Winston, Yalobusha, Yazoo.

Within those guidelines and the general grant guidelines, it will be up to you and your local officials to determine local priorities. You know your community and its needs. You can choose to place all of the grant funds into community shelters, individual shelters or a mix of both. You can also determine the amount of each grant, up to the limits set by the state. It is also your decision as to who will provide the non-Federal share.

You should submit your “Notice of Interest” form within 60 days (May 15, 2001) establishing the number of shelters and total funding that you are requesting. We will determine from the “Notice of Interest” forms submitted the total amount of funding being requested. You will then be notified as to the amount of funding available to your community.

If you have any questions concerning this matter, contact our Mitigation Bureau at the Disaster Field Office in Tupelo at 662-680-8175 or at the MEMA office in Jackson at (601) 960-9024.