



May 20, 2014
FEMA-4175-DR NR 021
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News Release

MEMA, FEMA, Volunteers Working Together to Help Disaster Survivors Recover in Mississippi

JACKSON, Miss. – A cooperative effort involving the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency (MEMA), federal agencies including FEMA, local governments and volunteer groups is underway to help disaster survivors recover from the [severe storms, tornadoes and flooding](#) that swept across Mississippi between April 28 and May 3.

The need is great. Officials have identified more than 700 households and individuals whose dwellings were too heavily damaged to be habitable. Nearly 2,000 other dwellings were less seriously damaged.

Compounding the issue, nearly 800 households who have registered for FEMA assistance are uninsured.

Clearing the debris is the first step toward recovery. Without homeowner insurance to pay the bill, it may seem an insurmountable obstacle. That is where the generosity of volunteer groups can be critical. Organizations such as Mennonite Disaster Service, Southern Baptist Disaster Relief, Samaritan's Purse and Team Rubicon have responded to Mississippi with the experience, the tools and the equipment to move debris and make repairs.

MEMA and FEMA are working together and with local governments, the volunteers and disaster survivors to get the debris moved to roadsides where it can be taken to the appropriate landfills. FEMA is covering 75 percent of the cost of hauling debris away from roadsides and the state is paying the remaining 25 percent. If homeowners contract to remove debris, it must be hauled away by the contractor.

Debris removal from private property is an allowable cost in U.S. Small Business Administration low-interest disaster loans to homeowners, renters and businesses.

Disaster survivors in **Itawamba, Jones, Leake, Lee, Lowndes, Madison, Montgomery, Rankin, Simpson, Warren, Wayne and Winston** counties may be eligible for FEMA's Individual Assistance program.

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Individuals and households in those counties can register for FEMA Individual Assistance online at [DisasterAssistance.gov](https://www.fema.gov/disaster/assistance), via smartphone or tablet at [m.FEMA.gov](https://m.fema.gov) or by calling the FEMA helpline at **800-621-FEMA (3362)**. People who are deaf, hard of hearing or have a speech disability and use a **TTY** should call **800-462-7585**. Lines are open 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. (central time) and assistance is available in multiple languages.

For additional information about SBA low-interest disaster loans, contact the SBA Disaster Assistance Customer Service Center by calling **800-659-2955** or TTY **800-877-8339**, emailing DisasterCustomerService@sba.gov or visiting sba.gov/disaster. SBA customer service representatives are available at **ALL** disaster recovery centers. Disaster recovery center locations can be found online at [FEMA.gov/DRCLocator](https://www.fema.gov/DRCLocator).

For more information on Mississippi disaster recovery, go to [fema.gov/disaster/4175](https://www.fema.gov/disaster/4175). Visit the MEMA site at [msema.org](https://www.msema.org) or on Facebook at [facebook.com/msemaorg](https://www.facebook.com/msemaorg).

FEMA's mission is to support our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards.

Disaster recovery assistance is available without regard to race, color, religion, nationality, sex, age, disability, English proficiency or economic status. If you or someone you know has been discriminated against, call FEMA toll-free at 800-621-FEMA (3362). If you have a speech disability or hearing loss and use a TTY, call 800-462-7585 directly; if you use 711 or Video Relay Service (VRS), call 800-621-3362.

FEMA's temporary housing assistance and grants for public transportation expenses, medical and dental expenses, and funeral and burial expenses do not require individuals to apply for an SBA loan. However, applicants who receive SBA loan applications must submit them to SBA loan officers to be eligible for assistance that covers personal property, vehicle repair or replacement, and moving and storage expenses.

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