



FEMA

W-06017

March 13, 2006

MEMORANDUM FOR: Write Your Own (WYO) Principal Coordinators
and the NFIP Servicing Agent

FROM: WYO Clearinghouse

SUBJECT: News Release DR-1604-MS-281
Mississippians Should Purchase Flood Insurance Now

The attached news release, issued by FEMA on March 9, 2006, encourages residents of Mississippi to purchase flood insurance before the start of the 2006 hurricane season, which officially begins June 1.

Please share this information with others in your organization, as appropriate.

Enclosure

cc: Vendors, IBHS, FIPNC, WYO Marketing Committee, Government Technical Representative

Suggested Routing: Claims, Marketing, Underwriting



**Mississippi Emergency
Management Agency**



FEMA

Recovery News

March 9, 2006
DR-1604-MS-281

Joint Information Center Media Contact:

FEMA/Mississippi News Desk: 228-385-5611

SBA News Desk: 404-347-3771

MISSISSIPPIANS SHOULD PURCHASE FLOOD INSURANCE NOW

Less than 60 days to make policies effective for 2006 hurricane season

BILOXI, Miss. – While Mississippians continue along the road to recovery from last year’s destructive hurricane season, the official June 1 start of this season is fast approaching. Because of the 30 day waiting period after purchase of a new policy to take effect, residents have less than 60 days to activate a new flood insurance policy in time for the beginning of the 2006 hurricane season.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), which oversees the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), encourages all Mississippi residents to seriously consider protecting their home and valuables with a flood insurance policy.

“Many home owners in Mississippi neglect to purchase flood insurance. What many do not realize is that all residents of our state live in a flood zone,” said Robert Latham, director for the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency (MEMA). “The only difference is whether you live in a low, moderate, or high risk area.”

Flooding is the number one natural disaster in the United States in terms of lives lost and damage to property. Mississippi has more than 5.2 million acres of floodplain and about 25 percent of all flood damage in the state occurs outside of mapped floodplains.

Yet, less than five percent (43,763 of more than 880,000) of Mississippi homeowners have flood insurance on their property.

“As the recovery effort progresses, we must be vigilant and mindful that another hurricane season is on the horizon,” said Nick Russo, federal coordinating officer for the Mississippi disaster recovery. “Having a flood insurance policy is the most important first step Mississippi residents can take to prepare for future storms.”

Purchasing flood insurance isn’t restricted to those living in a Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA). The only requirement is that you reside in a community participating in the NFIP program. Currently, Mississippi has 274 participating communities.

“Some people are not aware that in the event of a flood, their homeowner’s insurance policy is not going to cover their losses,” Latham said.

To date, 18,935 Mississippians (more than 90 percent) carrying flood insurance have received \$2.2 billion in claims from Hurricane Katrina related damages.

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Flood insurance is available to homeowners, business owners, and renters. Policies offer up to \$250,000 coverage for homeowners and up to \$500,000 for business owners. An additional \$100,000 of coverage for contents can be purchased as well. Policies average \$450 per year and the cost is substantially less in low and moderate flood risk areas.

For more information about FEMA and the NFIP, visit www.fema.gov and www.floodsmart.gov. To find out if your community participates in the NFIP go to www.fema.gov/fema/csb.shtm.

FEMA manages federal response and recovery efforts following any national incident. FEMA also initiates mitigation activities, works with state and local emergency managers, and manages the National Flood Insurance Program. FEMA became part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security on March 1, 2003.

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