

**Quarterly Newsletter**



<http://www.hindscountyms.com/departments/emergency-management>

**Hinds County Board of Supervisors**

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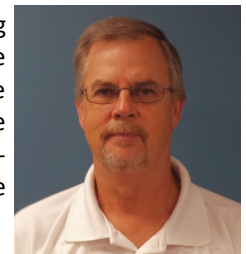
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**From the Desk of the Director**

As we enter into the spring season I can't help but think about the spring of 1979. For those of you who may not have been old enough or maybe not even born yet, there was a major flood that created a lot of damage and loss of property that year. It is well known by people who lived in the areas that were inundated with flood water. Their homes were destroyed, their property was damaged and their lives were turned upside down. It took a long time to recover from the "Easter Flood of 1979".



Ricky Moore, Director

Now, let me share a bit of the story written by former EOC Director, Larry J. Fisher (excerpts taken from a larger document).

*"On Wednesday Morning, April 11, 1979, the National Weather Service had been monitoring a major storm system that had been moving toward the State of Mississippi. This storm system had spawned numerous tornados in Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, and Arkansas.*

*The frontal system was moving out of Arkansas and Louisiana and at 7:00 pm areas in Northwestern Mississippi had started experiencing heavy rain, hail, and sightings of tornados. Rain began to fall in the Jackson area with severe thunderstorms developing around the city between 7:00 and 11:00 pm. Heavy rain and winds continued to cross the city and flash flooding in low lying areas began to occur. During the height of the storm in Jackson, the radar system at Thompson Filed was struck by lightning and taken out of operation with severe damage having been done to the system. The continuing heavy downpour of rain caused water to get into home in many low lying areas as creeks and streams began to swell out of their banks. Rain and storms continued in the Jackson area through the early hours of April 12<sup>th</sup> and continued through the day on Thursday. Information coming in and compiled by the weather service, the reservoir and the EOC indicated that flooding from the Pearl River was imminent. Personnel were called in to begin circulating letters to the low areas in Jackson. All indications were that the Pearl River would be at 36 feet or more by noon on Friday and people in low areas should begin to take action to avoid being caught by the rising backwaters.*

*On Friday morning, April 13, 1979, the Mayor called for an emergency meeting of all department heads. Information provided by the weather service indicated the Pearl River might reach up to thirty-eight feet, but surely not more than thirty-eight. Additional figures suggested that at least forty feet should be considered. The Mayor declared a State of Emergency and began immediate action to notify residents of all areas to be effected.....efforts continued thru Friday to make notifications. The weather system had cleared and the city was being bathed in sunshine with a nearly cloudless sky. This gave a sense of false security to*

some of the residents in the areas being told to evacuate.....sandbagging and pumping operations began for low building in downtown Jackson. Sandbagging of Central Fire Station began Friday night.....continuing studies began to indicate that a crest of 42 feet or more would be possible sometime Monday or Tuesday. Saturday morning brought new information and houses in north-east Jackson were filling with water to a depth of near three feet in some homes. During those early morning hours it became obvious that the Emergency Operations Center would be lost and was evacuated and relocated at Police Communications on Riverside Drive. Efforts were also being made to save the Waste Water Treatment Plant.

During the afternoon hours the continuing rise caused consideration for evacuating the fairground area. Numerous streets were now closed including Interstate 55 south of Interstate 20.....At 11:00 pm on Saturday General Walker met with city council personnel and the police liaison officer regarding the impending river stage going over forty-two feet and topping levees along the river. Military Police had been activated and were assisting the police in traffic control area control and escort efforts.

At 12:30 am on Sunday morning the Police Department Liaison Officer met with the Governor along with Corp of Engineer personnel.....it was predicted that water would top the levee protecting Flowood at 0300 hours and the Governor called for a meeting with the Mayors of Flowood, Pearl and Richland.

Sunday morning brought the dawning of another beautiful day but an Easter Sunday that would long be remembered. Homes in the northeast area now stood in a river stage of forty-two feet or more. The flooding was not extremely widespread with addition streets still flooding. Sunday brought continued efforts to notify people of the river continuing to rise.....the waste water plant was lost Sunday night. Considerations were made and the decision was made to seal off downtown Jackson.

The official crest at the Highway 80 gauge was 43.25 feet. The "Easter Flood" had crested on April 17, 1979 and became a flood of record."

There are many more details that fit between the "dots" but hopefully this helps you understand some of what took place if you were not around or won't drudge up too many bad memories for those of you who were.

There are plans to have a joint Press Conference with Hinds County, Rankin County, Jackson Weather Service and Mississippi Emergency Management Agency to commemorate the 40th Anniversary of the "1979 Easter Flood" on April 17, 2019 at 2:00 p.m.

Our hope is that by bringing awareness to the reality of River Flooding in Central Mississippi we can also bring awareness to the real need to have Family Emergency Plans, Family Disaster Kits, Evacuation Plans if you live in low lying areas. It is also vitally important if you are homeowner to know that you have adequate home owners insurance, that you have flood insurance (purchased through the National Flood Insurance Program) and if you are renting a place to live that you have renter's insurance. It may seem like an unnecessary policy but trust us when we say if your apartment or rental home is flooded the home owner's insurance will not cover your lost belongings.

Sincerely,



## Severe Weather Season is Here

It is the beginning of the Spring Severe Weather Season in Mississippi. Being prepared for severe thunderstorms and tornadoes is of the utmost importance. Hinds County is a recognized StormReady Community by the National Weather Service. StormReady communities/counties are better prepared to save lives from the onslaught of severe weather through advanced planning, education and awareness.

Preparedness is of vital importance to your family. Your family may not be together when a disaster strikes so it is important to plan in advance: how you will get to a safe place; how you will contact one another; how you will get back together; and what you will do in different situations. For information to help create a plan go to: [www.ready.gov/make-a-plan](http://www.ready.gov/make-a-plan)

Being prepared includes creating/updating your family disaster kit. This kit should include these basic items (for an extensive list go to [www.ready.gov/kit](http://www.ready.gov/kit)): one gallon of water per person per day for at least three days, for drinking and sanitation, three-day supply of non-perishable food, manual can opener, back up prescription medicines, battery-powered or hand crank radio and a NOAA Weather Radio, flashlight, extra batteries, first aid kit, whistle, moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation, wrench or pliers to turn off utilities, spare cell phone/device chargers.

Knowing the difference between a watch and a warning is also important in knowing when to take cover during a storm. Below are the descriptions provided by the National Weather Service.

A severe thunderstorm/tornado watch means that conditions are favorable for severe thunderstorms/tornadoes to develop. These are issued by the Storm Prediction Center in Norman, OK, typically before severe weather develops. Watches tend to last several hours and cover many counties.

A severe thunderstorm/tornado warning means that a severe thunderstorm/tornado has either been indicated on radar or witnessed by storm spotters. Your local NWS Forecast Office issues severe thunderstorm warnings when severe weather is developing or occurring. Warning tends to be less than an hour and cover a smaller area than a watch (i.e., 1-2 counties or less).

Please take the time to make sure your family is prepared for severe weather.



# Important—Create or Update Your Family Disaster Kit!!

## Build a Kit

Make sure your emergency kit is stocked with the items on the checklist below. Most of the items are inexpensive and easy to find, and any one of them could save your life. Headed to the store? Download a printable version to take with you. Once you take a look at the basic items, consider what unique needs your family might have, such as supplies for pets, or seniors.

After an emergency, you may need to survive on your own for several days. Being prepared means having your own food, water and other supplies to last for at least 72 hours. A disaster supplies kit is a collection of basic items your household may need in the event of an emergency.

## Basic Disaster Supplies Kit

To assemble your kit, store items in airtight plastic bags and put your entire disaster supplies kit in one or two easy-to-carry containers such as plastic bins or a duffel bag.

A basic emergency supply kit could include the following recommended items:

Water - one gallon of water per person per day for at least three days, for drinking and sanitation

Food - at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food

- Battery-powered or hand crank radio and a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert
- Flashlight
- First aid kit
- Extra batteries
- Whistle to signal for help
- Dust mask to help filter contaminated air and plastic sheeting and duct tape to shelter-in-place
- Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation
- Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
- Manual can opener for food
- Local maps
- Cell phone with chargers and a backup battery





## Volunteers NEEDED for Hinds County Fire Services

*The fire and rescue service is one of the most diverse and challenging professions today. It is the diversity that inspires most men and women to enter the service -both as volunteers and career employees. Imagine having to train to prepare yourself to cope with situations which range from building fires to childbirth to hazardous chemical spills to heart attacks, and almost any imaginable emergency situation in between. This diversity is coupled with the fact that these skills may be needed at any time of the day, seven days a week, in any kind of weather and very often under potentially stressful and emotional circumstances. These challenges contribute to our profession being personally rewarding.*

*As volunteers, we are here for two basic purposes. The first is to prevent fires or medical emergencies from occurring. This is achieved through fire prevention, health maintenance education, inspections, fire safety education, and code enforcement programs. Secondly, we are here to prepare ourselves to control fire or medical emergencies, should prevention fail. This is done through education, training, pre-incident planning, more training, state-of-the-art equipment, and more training. We are a paramilitary profession working in a "hurry up and wait" environment.*

*This business is not for everyone. You need more than just a desire to help people. You need courage and dedication, assertiveness, and a willingness to learn new skills and face new challenges. And you need to have the time for training sessions, meetings, emergency calls, maintenance of equipment, and other duties. The fire and rescue service is not for the meek or timid or for those who lose control during times of crises. Our service is one which calls on its members to perform hot, sweaty, dirty, and strenuous work, often in uncertain and hazardous environments.*

*The personal rewards and satisfaction received from the fire and rescue service are often beyond description. There is a sense of accomplishment after controlling a building fire, joy and elation when a child is born, compassion for accident victims, and fulfillment in teaching fire safety. This list goes on and on. The bottom line in our business is measured by the loss of life, pain and suffering and property damage we have prevented or reduced. We are here and prepared for one reason, and that is to provide service to the people." Passage was taken from FEMA's Retention and Recruitment manual titled "The Nature of the Business – A Picture of What It's Like to Volunteer in the Fire Service".*

There are twelve volunteer fire departments within Hinds County which ensures that there is one near you. Maybe you have a desire to leave a legacy of service for your children and grandchildren. Maybe you are the grandchild of somebody who has served in fire service for their entire life and you want to be a part of that legacy. Maybe you have had a medical emergency or a fire at your home and volunteer fire personnel responded and you are so thankful that you want to give back to your community in the same way. Then this article was written just for you.

There are many roles to fill within Hinds County Fire Services. Everybody has a skill that can be used in one of our departments. Whether you are a nurse, EMT, paramedic or would like to fight fires there is a place for you. If you have administrative skills, are comfortable with maintenance, checking equipment regularly or cleaning up around the station there is a place for you.

If you believe you have what it takes to become a member of the Hinds County Volunteer Fire Services and you live in the rural areas of Hinds County contact our office at 601.960.1476 for an application. You may also apply on our Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/HindsEOC](http://www.facebook.com/HindsEOC)

After you return your completed application we will provide your information to the appropriate volunteer fire chief.

# VOLUNTEERS BUILD RESILIENT COMMUNITIES



Below is a list of departments looking for dedicated volunteers to join their ranks:

Bench Volunteer Fire Department  
7460 Old Port Gibson Rd.  
Utica, Ms 39175

Crossroads Volunteer Fire Department  
3660 Dry Grove Rd.  
Terry, MS 39170

Terry Volunteer Fire Department  
Station 1: 2001 Tank Rd.  
Terry, MS 39170

Bolton Volunteer Fire Department  
117 W. Madison St.  
Bolton, MS 39041

Learned Volunteer Fire Department  
323 Front St.  
Raymond, MS 39154

Station 2: 129 Railroad Ave.  
Terry, MS 39170

Brownsville Volunteer Fire Department  
Station 1: 8057 Bolton Brownsville Rd.  
Bolton, MS 39041

Maclean Volunteer Fire Department  
1367 Ross Circle  
Jackson, MS 39209

Utica Volunteer Fire Department  
Station 1: 105 Depot St.  
Utica, MS 39175

Station 2: 4675 Farr Rd.  
Edwards, MS 39066

Pocahontas Volunteer Fire Department  
1140 FOA Road, Jackson, MS 39209

Station 2: 111 School St.  
Utica, MS 39175

Byram Volunteer Fire Department  
2571 Davis Rd.  
Terry, MS 39170

Raymond Volunteer Fire Department  
109 Court St.  
Raymond, MS 39154

West Hinds Volunteer Fire Department  
203 Main St..  
Edwards, MS 39066

**FIRE DEPARTMENTS  
NEED VOLUNTEERS  
LIKE YOU**

Seven out of ten firefighters and emergency responders are volunteers. If you have the heart to serve your community, you have everything we need.



## Grand Gulf Exercise 2019— Complete!

First and foremost we would like to thank the Hinds County Board of Supervisors for continuing to provide a team of employees who were given the opportunity to participate in the training and preparation for the exercise and the time to participate in the exercise itself. We are very grateful to those Hinds County employees, multiple volunteer firefighters, Mississippi Emergency Management Agency, the State Department of Health, the Department of Human Services, Hinds County SWAT Team, members of the Hinds County Sheriffs Office, American Medical Response and the Red Cross. We could not have done it without you and look forward to working with each of you over the next two years as we prepare to do it all over again in 2021.

During this exercise cycle the EOC staff and the REP Team members participated in several training sessions in the fall of 2018 and early part of 2019. Those classes included a Radiological Refresher Course which covered basic information regarding radiological material, ways to protect yourself from contamination and how to decontaminate people or things that have been contaminated. There was an additional course that taught the old and new members of the team how to set up and run a Reception Center. We are happy to report that the team has successfully completed the exercise cycle for 2019. The feedback received from the Federal Emergency Management Agency evaluators was that the team did a great job of demonstrating our plans and procedures.

### Mississippi Radiological Preparedness Program

The Mississippi Radiological Preparedness Program maintains state and county emergency response plans and procedures associated with preparation and response to an incident at the Grand Gulf Nuclear Station in Port Gibson, MS. Hinds County serves as a Host County in the event of an emergency evacuation due to an incident at the plant. This involves setting up a reception center for evacuees entering Hinds County. The program is so important that it is a Federal requirement that the county plans are tested and exercised every two years.

The Reception Center is located at the Hinds Community College in Utica, MS. A team of Hinds County employees and volunteers have been trained to set up and participate in running the reception center. Each person that comes thru the center must be monitored for any amount of radiological contamination. If they are found to be clean then they proceed into the gym where Red Cross and Human Services will register them and start the process of making them comfortable until they can be released or moved to a shelter.

Any person who is found to be contaminated must go thru a decontamination process. If they are able to remove all contamination then they are also processed thru the Red Cross and Human Services. If, after three attempts to decontaminate an evacuee, they are unable to be deemed clean then they will be transferred to River Region Hospital for further medical treatment.





## Tips to Avoid Snake Bites

1. Wear boots (preferably snake boots) and long pants when hiking to help block snake venom.
2. Stay on trails when hiking, away from underbrush and tall weeds.
3. Do not touch or disturb a snake, even if it appears dead.
4. Always look for concealed snakes before picking up rocks, sticks or firewood.
5. Never hike alone in remote areas. Always have someone with you who can assist in an emergency.
6. Teach children to respect snakes and to leave them alone.

It is important to learn to identify the snakes in your area. Identification will help doctors determine the treatment that is needed. If a bite occurs remain calm & seek medical attention. Remove restrictive clothing and/or jewelry near the bite and keep the area of the bite below the heart. Never cut the wound and attempt to suck the venom out, apply ice or cold packs or use a tourniquet or give the person alcohol or caffeinated drinks.

Venomous snakes: Triangular head, often multi-colored, some will have a rattle at end of tail and when swimming the whole body will float.



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*Prevention ~ Protection ~ Mitigation ~ Response ~ Recovery*

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*Emergency Management protects communities by coordinating and integrating all activities necessary to build, sustain, and improve the capability to prepare for, protect against, mitigate against, respond to, and recover from threatened or actual natural disasters, acts of terrorism, or other manmade disasters.*