



For Immediate Release

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State Fire Marshal Stresses Caution in Returning to Flooded Homes

Jackson, MS – With flood waters slowly receding, anxious homeowners may soon be able to return home to check their property. Commissioner of Insurance and State Fire Marshal Mike Chaney urges Mississippians returning to either their conventional or manufactured home to proceed with caution to avoid any risk of personal injury.

Homeowners are encouraged to consider the following safety guidelines when returning to assess damage from flood waters.

For manufactured or factory-built homes:

- Examine the overall exterior appearance for any signs that flood waters may have caused movement or settlement to occur.
- Look for obvious signs such as the building not level, the bottom skirting missing, block support piers missing, loose tie down straps, or the building completely off the foundation.
- If any of these conditions are present **Do Not Enter the Home.**
- Immediately contact a licensed installer in your area to assist with stabilizing your home.

For all types of housing:

- If the fuel system (propane or natural gas) for your home was not removed prior to the flood and the fuel container or metering device appears to have been displaced by the flood waters, contact your fuel source provider to inspect and disconnect the tank or meter from the supply lines.
- Flood in the interior of a home can cause issues with the heating/cooling systems, the plumbing systems and the electrical systems. It is essential that these systems be evaluated by licensed heating/cooling contractors, plumbers and electricians for possible damages before any utility service is restored.
- Wildlife may have taken refuge in the home to escape flood waters. Use caution when entering rooms, opening doors and cabinets, and removing furniture from the home to prevent being bitten by small animals.
- File a flood insurance claim as soon as possible. If you need further assistance call 1-800-621-3362 to register for FEMA Flood Disaster Assistance.

The State Fire Marshal's Office stands ready to provide guidance to all persons whose lives and property have been affected by the recent flooding. From a plan jointly prepared by Federal, State and local agencies to assist in the assessment of flood damaged factory-built homes the State Fire Marshal's Office will be providing the following services:

- Assist federal agencies (FEMA, HUD) and state government agencies (MEMA) in all flood affected counties with inspection of flood damaged factory-built homes.
- Extend waivers of inspection fees and site preparation requirements to all FEMA temporary housing installations. However, for the safety of the occupants of the temporary housing, all anchoring and tie-down requirements will continue to be enforced.
- Ensure that only installers licensed in the State of Mississippi are eligible for the work to set-up and install the FEMA temporary housing.
- Provide for proper identification and location of FEMA temporary housing that will designate it as a flood assistance shelter.
- Factory-built homes that have been designated as a total loss and listed as "salvage" will be tracked under the guidance of the Insurance Commissioner and State Fire Marshal.
- Coordinate with the Mississippi Tax Commission to ensure that all titles for factory-built home that have been flood damaged are properly designated on all official documentation to prevent resale to consumers.
- Monitor all fire related issues that occur on both factory-built homes and conventional housing during the property clean-up and recovery process.

For further information and assistance please contact the State Fire Marshal's Office at 601-359-1061 or visit the State Fire Marshal page of the Mississippi Insurance Department (MID) website at www.mid.state.ms.us. Get further safety tips by following the MID on Twitter @MSInsuranceDept, or the State Fire Marshal @MSFireSafe.

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