



For Immediate Release

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Chaney Surveys Storm Damage, Says Early Warnings Saved Lives

Jackson, MS – After surveying the damage done by the tornado that struck Hattiesburg last Sunday, Commissioner of Insurance Mike Chaney believes the storm could be as costly as the 2010 Yazoo County tornado. An estimated 827 homes across the state suffered major damage or were destroyed. The bulk of those homes are in Forrest and Lamar counties.

“I’m thankful there were no fatalities, which I attribute to the excellent, successful early warning systems. Those in the areas most affected had sufficient time to take shelter and people heeded those warnings,” Chaney said.

The Mississippi State Fire Marshal’s Office had deputies on the ground in Hattiesburg 30 minutes after the storm hit to assist local authorities in search and rescue.

“Our first priority is to help protect lives and property and we will continue to work with FEMA, MEMA and all agencies to assist storm victims,” Chaney added.

He also stated he has been pleased with the industry’s response to the storm, citing the quick implementation of department and company disaster plans.

The Mississippi Insurance Department (MID) had a mobile claims center set up in the Home Depot parking lot the day after the storm and was quickly joined in the area by disaster teams from major insurers. Those claims centers are in the following locations:

- MID MOBILE CLAIMS UNIT – Parking lot of Home Depot I-59 at the Hardy St Exit
- ALFA INSURANCE – Hwy 11 near Oak Grove High school at Old Eleven Plaza
- ALLSTATE INSURANCE – Parking lot of Home Depot I-59 at the Hardy St Exit
- ALLSTATE INSURANCE – Two mobile claims units in hardest hit neighborhoods
- STATE FARM INSURANCE – Parking lot of Lowe’s
- SHELTER INSURANCE – Parking lot behind Crescent City Café off Hardy St.
- SHELTER INSURANCE – Mobile claims units roving through area

When hiring a contractor to assist with repairs, MID recommends you get references and get a written contract on work to be performed. You may verify a contractor's license by calling the Mississippi State Board of Contractors at 1-800-880-6161 or visit their website at www.msbc.us.

Consumers may find a list of #800 Claims reporting numbers on a special Hattiesburg Tornado page on the MID website at www.mid.ms.gov. The page also includes tips for consumers in disaster recovery, and other recovery information. Consumers may call the MID Consumer Services hotline at 1-800-562-2957 for additional assistance. MID will update the page as more information becomes available and is also posting information via Twitter @MSInsuranceDept and on the MID Facebook page.

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