



MISSISSIPPI

Insurance Matters

Taking insurance matters from over your head to under control.

MISSISSIPPI
INSURANCE DEPARTMENT

MIKE CHANEY *Commissioner and State Fire Marshal*

Mississippi Insurance Department: "Insurance Matters" November 2013

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From left, Dr. Andre Liebenberg, Ole Miss Insurance Chair and right, Roger Elfert, Ole Miss RMI Professional Society President present Commissioner Mike Chaney with the 2013 Distinguished Service Award from the Ole Miss Risk Management and Insurance program, and its Professional Society.



Keeping Your Home Safe for the Holiday

Nationally, Thanksgiving is the leading day for cooking fires, with three times as many cooking fires as an average day. It can happen at any time. When you're at the stove, working hard on the family's Thanksgiving dinner and the phone or doorbell rings; someone needs help in another room, and you step away from the stove, for just a moment. That one moment is all it can take for Thanksgiving dinner and possibly your home to go up in flames.

Thanksgiving is a day of intense cooking, when stovetops and ovens are working overtime. This time brings a greater risk of fire, particularly when you try to prepare several dishes while entertaining family and friends.

Protect your family and belongings during the holiday with these **Safety Tips** and **Videos** from the State Fire Marshal's Office.

[Holiday Fire Safety](#) (*Safety Tips on Holiday Cooking - Turkey Frying - Heating - Decorating*)

[Keep Things Away from Heat](#) (*video*)

[Keep Kids Away from Cooking Areas](#) (*video*)

[Prevent Scalds and Burns](#) (*video*)

[Watch What You Heat](#) (*video*)

[Know What to Do if There is a Fire](#) (*video*)

AUTOMOBILE SAFETY

www.iii.org ([Insurance Information Institute](#))

Fall is peak season for deer and auto collisions and that means drivers along the nation's roadways need to be especially vigilant. Deer migration and mating season generally runs from October through December, and causes a dramatic spike in the movement of deer population. As a result, more deer-vehicle collisions



occur in this period than at any other time of year.

Results from a recent survey conducted by State Farm Insurance shows that Mississippi ranks 8th in the nation in the likelihood of a collision with a deer. The survey also indicates that the likelihood of a Mississippi driver striking a deer with a vehicle in the next 12 months is 1/84. Some insurance companies list Mississippi as deer-collision high risk zone.

State wildlife officials also report that there is a deer overpopulation problem in the state. Statistics from the Mississippi Highway Patrol show there have been over 1200 vehicle vs. deer crashes so far this year; there have been 68 vehicles vs. deer crashes resulting in injury; and there have been no fatalities in vehicle vs. deer crashes so far this year.

Follow these safety tips:

BE AWARE

- Deer are not just found on rural roads near wooded areas; many deer crashes occur on busy highways near cities.
- Deer are unpredictable, especially when faced with glaring headlights, blowing horns and fast-moving vehicles. They often dart into traffic.
- Deer often move in groups. If you see one, there are likely to be more in the vicinity.

TAKE PRECAUTIONS

- Drive with care when moving through deer-crossing zones, in areas known to have a large deer population and in areas where roads divide agricultural fields from forestland.
- Always wear your seatbelt.
- When driving at night, use high beam headlights when there is no oncoming traffic. The high beams will better illuminate the eyes of any deer on or near the roadway.
- Be especially attentive from sunset to midnight and during the hours shortly before or after sunrise. These are the highest risk times for deer-vehicle collisions.

- Brake firmly when you notice a deer in or near your path, but stay in your lane. Many serious crashes occur when drivers swerve to avoid a deer and hit another vehicle or lose control of their cars.
- Do not rely on devices such as deer whistles, deer fences and reflectors to deter deer. These devices have not proven effective.

In the event your vehicle strikes a deer, try to avoid going near or touching the animal. A frightened and wounded deer can hurt you and further injure itself. If the deer is blocking the roadway and poses a danger to other motorists, you should call the police immediately. And contact your insurance professional as quickly as possible to report any damage to your car.

TEEN DON'T TEXT AND DRIVE WEEK
NOVEMBER 18 -24



How will you stop texting and driving? Find out preventive solutions to help you **STOP TEXTING WHILE DRIVING!**

View facts, tips, and video



<http://stoptextsstopwrecks.org/#home>

NOVEMBER 2013: LTC AWARENESS MONTH



Information regarding the latest facts on Long-Term Care Insurance and Awareness is available through the American Association of Long-Term Care Insurance.

[For Producers](#)



[For Consumers](#)



[For Employers](#)



SPECIAL NOTE: The 2013 MID Medicare Supplement Shopper's Guide is now available on the Mississippi Insurance Department website.

2013 Medicare Supplement Shopper's Guide



2013
Medicare Supplement
Shopper's Guide



Healthcare

Commissioner Chaney's Statement on the Recent Affordable Care Act Announcement

Jackson, MS - "The President announced today that the federal government would delay enforcement of the Affordable Care Act's market reforms in 2014 for plans that are currently in effect.

In Mississippi we took steps several months ago to ensure that these reforms would have initial minimal impact on policyholders in our state. We allowed and encouraged the carriers to extend their plan years and coverage periods until December 2014, allowing our citizens to keep their existing coverage with minimum rate increases and with more choices.

We do not expect that the President's actions announced today will have any major impact on our state. However, it is quite possible that in the long run these reforms will have a major impact on the solvency of companies and might be a major cost to the industry, thus driving up prices over time. We will continue to closely follow any further developments to ensure we protect the interests of Mississippians."

BCBS / HMA Dispute Statement

Jackson, MS - In a letter dated October 17, 2013, the Governor advised Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi that if it failed to return the ten HMA hospitals to network status by 5:00 p.m. on October 18, 2013, he would issue an Executive Order directing that the contracts be restored. The next day, Blue Cross responded by filing for a Temporary Restraining Order against the Governor in Federal Court, asserting that the Governor did not have the authority to order the company to enter into private contracts with the ten HMA hospitals.

Subsequently, the Governor issued Executive Order No. 1327, directing Blue Cross to return the ten affected hospitals to the network.

The Court heard Blue Cross's request for a TRO on October 25, 2013 and granted the TRO. As a result, the TRO prohibited the Executive Order from going into effect, and the Court set a date for a full hearing on the matter.

Prior to the scheduled November 5, 2013 hearing, the Governor withdrew his Executive Order to the extent that it required Blue Cross to return the ten HMA hospitals to the network. Blue Cross then dismissed its lawsuit against the Governor.

The following statement was issued by Commissioner Chaney, after the Governor withdrew his Executive Order:

"I am pleased that the Governor and Blue Cross have resolved their differences. The Department is in the midst of an in-depth and vigorous investigation of the adequacy of Blue Cross' provider network. This investigation began prior to the issuance of Executive Order 1327 by the Governor's Office. As I have stated many times to HMA and Blue Cross since the dispute began, I encourage the parties to come together and find common ground to ensure policyholders have access to affordable care. To that end, I am happy that this office was able to help facilitate four HMA hospitals once again being paid as network hospitals."

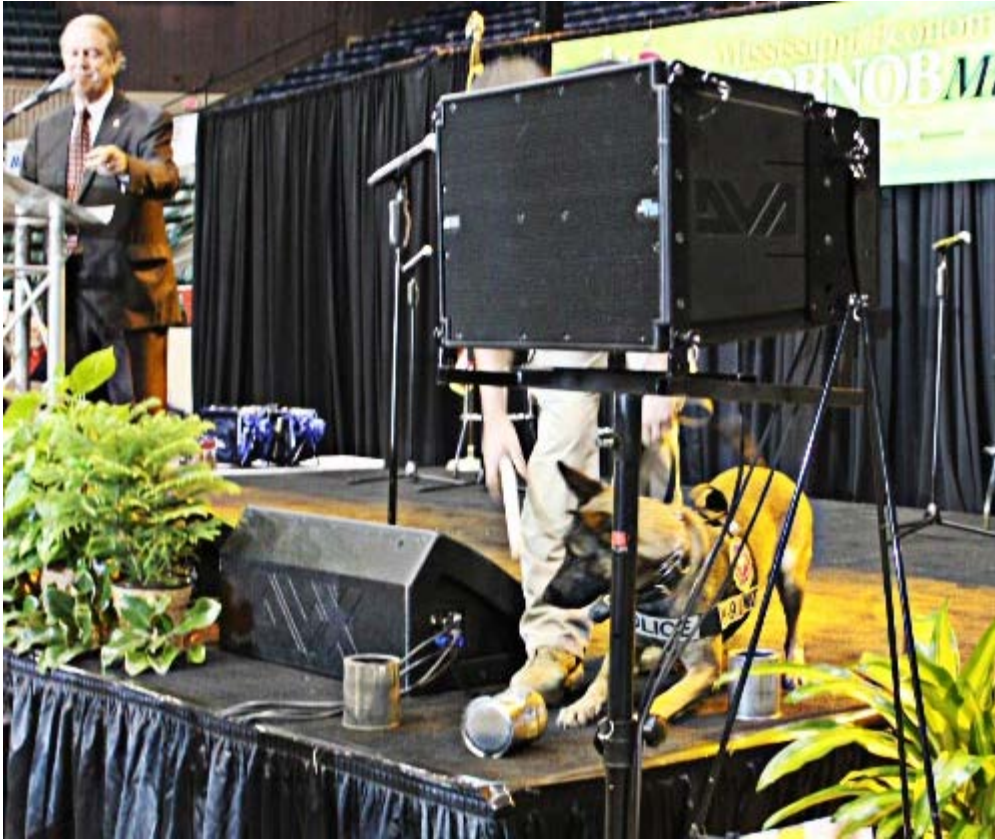
Healthcare Terms

Medicaid — A joint state and federal program that provides health care coverage to eligible categories of low-income individuals. Rules for eligible categories (such as children, pregnant women, people with disabilities, etc.), and for income and asset requirements, vary by state. Coverage is generally available to all individuals who meet these state eligibility requirements.

CHIP —The Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) provides coverage to low- and moderate-income children. Like Medicaid, it is jointly funded and administered by the states and the federal government.

Medicare — A federal government program that provides health care coverage for all eligible individuals age 65 or older or under age 65 with a disability, regardless of income or assets. Eligible individuals can receive coverage for hospital services (Medicare Part A), medical services (Medicare Part B), and prescription drugs (Medicare Part D). Together, Medicare Part A and B are known as Original Medicare. Benefits can also be provided through a Medicare Advantage plan (Medicare Part C).

MEC Hobnob Mississippi 2013



As Commissioner of Insurance and State Fire Marshal Mike Chaney looks on, Sita, the State Fire Marshal's Office new arson dog gives a demonstration of her abilities at MEC's HobNob.



CONSUMER SERVICES DIVISION CLAIMS ACTIVITY

CLAIMS ACTIVITY REPORT OCTOBER 2013

Month of October 2013		Year-To-Date	
	# Claims Handled	# Claims Handled	Claims payments or premium refunds secured
Property and Casualty Insurance	729	5,931	\$117,455.26
Accident & Health (Includes A&H, PPACA, Medicare, and Misc.)	751	3,977	\$64,006.88
Life Insurance (Includes Life, Burial, and Misc.)	276	2,419	\$189,431.92
Totals:	1,756	12,327	\$370,894.06

Commissioner's Corner



Mike Chaney

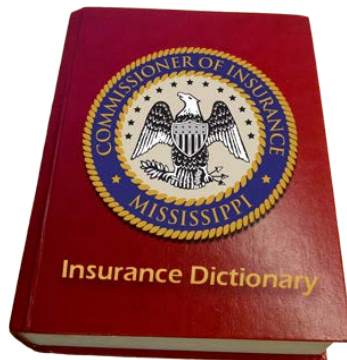
Insurance Commissioner and State Fire Marshal



Q: Do you have a continuing education segment for renewal of life license?

A: Producers who hold the Life Accident & Health line of authority can complete continuing education courses in the following categories for CE credit: Life only, Accident and Health only, Life Accident & Health, Ethics, General credit, Insurance Law, Annuities and Long term care. We have over 500 approved education providers and have approved over 10,000 courses. The list of approved providers and courses is located at www.sircon.com.

Have an insurance consumer question for Commissioner Chaney? Email your question to info@mid.ms.gov and you might be featured in our next newsletter!



Insurance Terms of the Month:

Business Interruption Insurance - Commercial coverage that reimburses a business owner for lost profits and continuing fixed expenses during the time a business must stay closed while the premises are being restored because of physical damage from a covered peril, such as fire. It may also cover financial losses that may occur if authorities limit access to an area after a disaster and that action prevents customers from reaching the business.

Peril - A specific risk or cause of loss covered by an insurance policy, such as fire, windstorm, loss or theft. A named-peril policy covers the policyholder only for the risks named in the policy in contrast to an all-risk policy, which covers all causes of loss except those specifically excluded.

Rate Regulation - The process by which states monitor

insurance companies' rate changes, done either through prior approval or open competition models.

REGULATOR 101.



Receiving the first Elevator and Building Safety Inspector Licenses from Elevator and Building Safety Inspector Division Director Joseph Ammerman (Center) are, left, Gary Brewer and, right, Paul Lackey.

The **Elevator and Building Safety** is a new, mandatory program given to the Mississippi Insurance Department during the 2013 Legislative Session. It is responsible for licensing and overseeing all elevator and conveyance mechanics, technicians, inspectors and companies that install, repair or inspect public conveyances in Mississippi; establishing minimum standards for all conveyances, personnel and service; compiling a database of every elevator and people-moving conveyance and their locations in the state; compiling and keeping a database of all conveyance accidents and injuries in the state

This division also works closely with the Coastal Retrofit Hurricane Mitigation Program in the six coastal counties, the Mississippi Windstorm Mitigation Council and other mitigation programs. It also works on strengthening statewide building codes in an effort to provide higher quality construction for residential homes and lower insurance premiums for those homes.

As of this date, there have been no additional personnel added to the MID staff. The elevator safety provisions have been accomplished with one part-time administrator and one part-time administrative staff. There will be two additional hires very soon as the program actually moves from the planning stages into full licensing and production.

Since the bill became law, the MID has issued the rules and regulations pertaining to the act and is accepting applications and issuing licenses. Full implementation of the act will take effect Jan. 1, 2015 when building owners will be responsible for registering and obtaining permits for their elevators and conveyances.

The division will continue working with state building code groups and expects to spearhead an attempt in the upcoming legislative session to pass a stronger, mandatory building code requirement. Mitigation efforts will continue. Currently the program has spent approximately 65 percent of the original \$20 million grant and over 600 homes have been retrofitted to withstand a Category III hurricane.

How the mitigation program works:

After a homeowner applies for the program, an initial inspection is done by a certified inspector to make certain the home qualifies for a retro-fit and the retro-fit will be cost-effective. This inspection includes exact measurements of the home, including pictures of the home and that data is entered into a databank. The home must be able to make use of all the retro-fit applications to qualify. Partial retro-fits are not allowed at this time.

THE RETROFIT – Mitigating an existing home consists of using strapping to reinforce the roof decking attachment, roof to wall attachment, adding a secondary foam water barrier to roof decking, additional bracing for gable ends, shuttering openings such as windows and doors and retrofitting exterior doors and garage doors.

After the initial inspection, the homeowner applies for the grant. To qualify for the grant, a homeowner must have a valid homestead exemption and the home must be a single family, site-built home. The project must also be cost-effective as determined through the Benefit/Cost Analysis. The project must increase the home's wind resistance rating by 30 points and a wind-certified engineer must certify that the recommended mitigation will allow the home to withstand Category Three hurricane wind loads

If these criteria are met and the grant is awarded, an engineer evaluates the project and a cost estimate is provided.

If the project meets all criteria and the grant is approved, a request for a building permit is generated and the project is given to a certified and trained contractor for the work to be done.

After the contractor performs the retro-fit, a certified inspector must approve the final work before the job is certified. *(Before the actual work begins, the homeowner is given a brief explanation of what to expect during the installation process, such as noise, and partial removal of certain portions of the home during installation.)*

After certification, the home is entered into a databank which tracks all retro-fitted homes in the project area.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

- **October 15 – December 7, 2013** [Medicare Open Enrollment](#)
 - **November 28 - 29** MID Offices Closed for Thanksgiving Holiday
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