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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Insurance Department Ready to Assist Storm Victims

Jackson, MS –The Mississippi Insurance Department stands ready to assist those many Mississippians assessing the destruction and cleaning up from Wednesday night's storms. Victims of the storm are urged to document damage and file their insurance claims as quickly as possible.

“Our thoughts go out to the residents of Magee, which appears to have taken the hardest hit, and to every citizen who was affected by Wednesday night's storms. The Mississippi Insurance Department is prepared to offer its assistance in helping them recover as quickly as they can,” Commissioner of Insurance Mike Chaney said.

To help Mississippians expedite filing claims and prepare for the severe storms predicted for the next several days, Chaney offers the following tips:

If you suffered damage from last night's storms:

- Contact the agent that sold you the policy. If you have trouble reaching your agent contact the company or the Mississippi Insurance Department (MID) at 1-800- 562-2957. Victims should go ahead and get their insurance company's name and policy number to speed up the claim process.
- Keep all receipts for expenses for any damages to your home.
- Be careful before you enter any damaged property and be careful of escaping natural gas, live electrical wires and collapses.
- Take pictures of any damages before you repair both inside and outside. If possible, make temporary repairs to your property to prevent further losses.

- Hire licensed and reputable contractors for repair work. Call the Mississippi State Board of Contractors at 1-800-880-6161 or visit their website at <http://www.msdoc.state.ms.us> to determine if a contractor is properly licensed.

If you have not suffered damage there is still time to prepare for the next round of storms.

- Move all of your important documents to a safe location; store them in a safe deposit box outside the area.
- Take an inventory of your personal property, such as clothes, jewelry, furniture, computers and audio/video equipment. Photos and video of your home, as well as sales receipts and the model and serial numbers of items, will make filing a claim simpler. (A home inventory checklist is available on the Consumer Publications List page of the MID website at www.mid.state.ms.us.)
- Leave a copy of your inventory with friends or relatives, e-mail it to yourself, and/or store it in a safe location. In addition, add insurance information to your inventory information - the name of your company and agent, policy number and contact information.