



News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Forrest County Breaks Ground on Community Shelter

HATTIESBURG, Miss. – Forrest County officials are breaking ground today on a facility to make sure its citizens are safer and better protected from future disasters. The community storm shelter will be constructed at 946 Sullivan Drive adjacent to the James Lynn Cartlidge Multi-Purpose Center and will be able to shelter 882 people.

The shelter will be paid for by a \$2.1 million grant through the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program which is administered by the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency (MEMA). “Forrest County is very appreciative to MEMA and FEMA for providing funds to construct a shelter that will protect the public during disasters.” said David Hogan, President of the Forrest County Board of Supervisors.

The primary goal of the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program is to prevent future loss of life and property which includes funding stand-alone shelters designed and constructed to withstand high winds and the impact of windborne debris during such events.

The American Red Cross and other similar agencies are typically faced with the task of providing temporary shelter for storm evacuees. Janice F. Vannatta, Executive Director of the American Red Cross, South Central Mississippi Chapter states, “The American Red Cross is pleased to partner with Forrest County and the Emergency Management District in providing sheltering during emergencies. This facility will play an important role in meeting the needs of our community during disaster.”

This shelter will be able to provide protection for up to approximately 36 hours or until the emergency situation has diminished to the point that normal operations may resume. “Given the amount of time and resources required to activate the shelter, the facility will be opened in connection with major events such as hurricanes rather than during tornadoes and severe storm warnings,” said Terry Steed, Emergency Management Director.

Please call 601.583.7507 for more information.

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