

Take a free ride

Coast Transit urges needy to register now for emergency evacuation transportation

Coast Transit Authority is reminding residents in need of emergency storm-evacuation transportation to sign up now.

"We strongly advise that if at all possible you make your own emergency evacuation plans and evacuate the area when instructed to do so by the county EMA," said CTA Director Kevin Coggin. "It is always best to have your own plans in place, but we are available to provide assistance to the citizens of Harrison County if they need it."

CTA is managing the evacuation transportation program for Harrison County and will be providing transportation assistance for out-of-town evacuations, to local shelters of last resort, and shelters for pets and their owners.

Residents are advised to sign up now if there is a chance

they will need evacuation transportation. You should register with Coast Transit Authority immediately to make sure you are on the list to receive assistance.

The number to call is 896-8080.

Spanish speaking operators are available. CTA also needs to know as soon as possible of any special medical or other needs to those being transported.

Transportation to a pet shelter will be provided for dogs, cats, and birds only. The pets must be in carriers that can be lifted and loaded by the pet owner. There will be no assistance for loading and unloading pets.

The Harrison County Emergency Management Agency and the Humane Society of South Mississippi are providing

a pet shelter, but the pet owners must accompany the pet during transportation and stay at the same shelter with their pets.

Only two carry-on items per person will be allowed on the buses, either two bags or one bag and one pet carrier. There will be no exceptions.

"It is critical that you go ahead now and make preparations to leave if an evacuation is called," Coggin said. "You should prepare the items you must have to leave in orderly fashion so that you can leave quickly and you should have pet carriers in hand ready to use if you intend to take a pet. And, you should register immediately if you think you could require our assistance."

You can get free how-to info on preparation and construction

Need more information about flood preparation and construction? The city has assembled a wealth of free how-to booklets about steps that you can take to minimize damage from storms and flooding.

The books are available at these locations:

- Community Development Department, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Municipal Building, 435-6280.
 - City Hall lobby, Lameuse Street.
 - Donal Snyder Sr. Community Center, Pass Road
 - Biloxi public libraries (Lameuse Street, Popp's Ferry Road, Division Street and Pass Road).
 - Woolmarket Fire Station, 8479 Woolmarket Road
- You can also contact the City's Building or Code Enforcement divisions online at biloxi.ms.us/communitydevelopment.

For detailed info on building permits and construction requirements, contact the Building and Code Enforcement divisions at the Community Development Department, 435-6270 or online at building@biloxi.ms.us. Those planning work in a flood-prone area should contact floodplain manager Rick Stickler at rstickler@biloxi.ms.us or at 435-6270.

You can obtain a number of helpful emergency preparedness brochures online at FEMA's website (www.fema.gov) or from the National Hurricane Center (www.noaa.nhc.gov).

Storm, disaster info can be kid stuff, thanks to website

It's never too soon to begin the education process about storms and the damage they can cause, and a host of educational activities especially for children are now available online.

The Flood and Storm section of Biloxi's web site (<http://biloxi.ms.us>) includes a direct link to

FEMA for Kids, which

features Herman, "the spokescrab" and kid-style information on how to be prepared for disasters and how you can prevent disaster damage.

Parents and teachers will find a number of family or classroom activities for groups.

To see the FEMA for Kids site, visit <http://biloxi.ms.us/floodstorm> and click on For Kids at the top right.



President Bush consoles east Biloxi residents in this image from the city-commissioned documentary 'Katrina and Biloxi.'

City, Cable One to air 'Katrina & Biloxi'

The City of Biloxi and Cable One will air "Katrina & Biloxi: A Story of Resolve and Resilience" on Aug. 29, the third anniversary of the storm, to help educate residents about the dangers of storms and flooding.

Cable One will air the program Coastwide at 8:30 a.m., 8:30 p.m. and 10:30 p.m. on Cable 13.

The 50-minute documentary includes video of the city before, during and after the storm and uses interviews with Biloxi leaders, residents and volunteers to tell the story of Biloxi's encounter with Katrina, the worst natural disaster to ever strike the United States.

"This is a great story," Mayor A.J. Holloway said of the documentary, "and I hope Biloxi residents and all residents of the Gulf Coast tune in so they'll be reminded of just how great our community is, and how far we've come. The biggest thing people, though, is to heed the advice you'll hear in this presentation: take storms seriously and prepare accordingly."

The 50-minute documentary is part of a DVD produced by the city and Tom Nebel Productions, a firm that accompanied the Atlanta Fire Department to Biloxi in the aftermath of the storm. The DVD also comes with a 52-page full-color photo album that was produced by the city and The Ad Group, a Biloxi advertising agency.

The \$85,000 investment has grossed more than \$300,000 for the city, with sales in 46 of the 50 states and around the globe. Online discounts are available at biloxi.ms.us.

The "Katrina & Biloxi" effort has won awards from the American Advertising Federation and the Public Relations Association of Mississippi.

Federal agencies encouraging residents to use direct deposit

In those critical days after Hurricane Katrina, the U.S. Treasury Department worked with the Social Security Administration to get displaced Social Security and other federal benefit checks to recipients, as quickly as possible. But those who already were using direct deposit had immediate access to their funds from virtually anywhere, thanks to ATMs and financial institution networks.

That's why the Treasury and the Federal Reserve Banks – through **Go Direct** – are urging Social Security check

recipients who live along the Gulf Coast to switch to direct deposit. The recommendation, offered in light of last year's devastating hurricanes, is aimed at ensuring citizens receive their federal benefits without disruption.

Go Direct makes it easy to sign up for direct deposit. People can sign up by calling the toll-free **Go Direct** helpline at (800) 333-1795 or by visiting www.GoDirect.org to sign up online. To learn more about **Go Direct**, visit www.GoDirect.org.