



STATE OF MISSISSIPPI  
PHIL BRYANT, GOVERNOR

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY  
TRUDY D. FISHER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

<BR>

Release Date: 08/31/2012

Title: MDEQ PROVIDES DEBRIS CLEAN UP GUIDANCE

Author: Robbie Wilbur

Publish:  Yes

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Aug. 31, 2012

Media Contact: Robbie Wilbur,  
MDEQ, 601-961-5277

### **MDEQ PROVIDES DEBRIS CLEAN UP GUIDANCE**

JACKSON, Miss. – The Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality is providing guidance on debris separation for home owners, business operators, and others as they clean up their properties. In many cases, the debris in and around houses or businesses may contain hazardous materials or contaminants mixed with other nonhazardous debris items.

Nonhazardous wastes and debris including vegetative material such as tree limbs will generally need to be disposed at a municipal solid waste landfill or a class I rubbish disposal site or recycled at a legitimate recycling facility. Household hazardous materials should be collected separately from other debris for disposal.

The following guidelines will aid in properly disposing of debris and other wastes. In addition, MDEQ Solid Waste staff are available for clarification at 601-961-5304.

- Don't throw away household hazardous waste materials. Collect and contain them in their original container, if possible, or in a plastic bin or tub for disposal at a household hazardous waste collection site or event. Do not mix these materials in the same container. If a household hazardous collection site or event is not being held in your area, please contact the MDEQ Solid Waste staff to help you find an appropriate method of disposing of the material. Household hazardous wastes would include the following types of household items:

- o Antifreeze.
  - o Fuels (gasoline, propane, diesel, kerosene, etc.)
  - o Fuel containers or canisters.
  - o Motor and hydraulic oils.
  - o Paints, stains, and varnishes.
  - o Paint thinner.
  - o Solvents.
  - o Other cleaning supplies and chemicals.
  - o Pesticides, herbicides, and other farm/lawn chemicals.
  - o Household thermostats and thermometers.
- Structural components, vegetative debris, and the contents of a home or building that have been contacted by flood waters or damaged by the high winds associated with storm events may need to be disposed. Structural components will include sheetrock/drywall, carpeting, wood components, electrical components, flooring, doors, and other physical parts of the structure. Vegetative debris will include downed trees, limbs, brush, and other similar materials. The damaged contents of homes and buildings may include household furnishings, appliances, electronics, clothing, food items and other personal items. Personal items contacted by flood waters such as medications, cosmetics, and other similar personal grooming items should not be used and should also be disposed.
  - Do NOT burn vegetative storm debris or other debris from houses, businesses and other structures. Open burning of such debris is prohibited by state and federal laws and regulations.
  - Wear protective clothing and gloves when handling storm debris as it may have become contaminated by raw sewage and/or hazardous chemicals released by flood waters.
  - Be cautious of sharp objects or other hazards in standing water.
  - Lookout for snakes and rodents that may have taken refuge in your house during the storm event. Snakes tend to find high and dry hiding spots, such as an attic or the top of ceiling tiles, while rodents are more prone to be found in the walls and attic spaces.
  - When removing debris from a damaged building be cautious as the structural integrity of the building may not be sound.
  - Look for exposed power lines or other safety hazards present when removing vegetative debris.
  - Some building materials -- pipe insulation, electrical insulation flooring, ceiling ties, roofing materials, and siding -- may contain asbestos. Caution should be used in demolishing and/or renovating these structures so as to not crush or grind up the asbestos containing materials. (See MDEQ's guidance on asbestos and lead paint).
  - Segregate debris according to how the items will be disposed or recycled. Local governments will provide information on how the clean-up and collection of storm debris will occur in that area.

- Dispose of debris in the manner that is developed for your community. This may mean hauling the debris directly to a permitted landfill or to a local storm debris staging or collection site or placing the debris near the public road for collection. Additional information will be forthcoming in your community about how debris will be managed and collected.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality

Solid Waste Management Programs

P.O. Box 2261, Jackson, MS 39225

Phone: 601-961-5171

[www.deq.state.ms.us](http://www.deq.state.ms.us)

###