



STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
HALEY BARBOUR, GOVERNOR
MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
Trudy D. Fisher, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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MDEQ RECOMMENDS WASTEWATER FLOOD PREPARATIONS

(JACKSON, Miss.) – As a result of flooding forecasts and rising water levels for the Mississippi River, the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) advises owners of wastewater treatment facilities and home owners with individual onsite wastewater treatment systems or septic tanks to take precautions to minimize any potential impacts to these facilities if flooding occurs.

MDEQ encourages wastewater treatment facility owners/operators to ensure fuel tanks such as propane, gas, or diesel be secured. Furthermore, chemicals used in the treatment process (e.g., chlorine, sulfur dioxide) in containers or cylinders should be secured or moved to a safe location. Pumps, motors, aerators, and other mechanical equipment should have the power shut off if flooding is imminent. If possible, electrical controls should be removed or sealed to prevent damage and expedite system startup after flood waters recede. Plans for alternate access routes to wastewater treatment facilities during high water should be in place. Any standby power sources, such as generators, should be protected and have an adequate, protected fuel supply to operate. MDEQ will be making courtesy visits to as many potentially impacted facilities as possible to assist in preparation for the rising waters.

Homeowners with onsite wastewater systems should take precautions to prevent flood waters from entering their homes through septic tanks or aerated treatment units. If flooding is imminent, the power to pumps and/or aerators should be turned off and the power control panels protected. Removal and safeguarding of electrical devices associated with the system may result in avoided costs and delays to the homeowner associated with start up of the wastewater treatment plant after flood waters recede. Only qualified individuals should work with electricity or electrical components.

Any requests for assistance by a wastewater facility owner/operator or notifications of emergency conditions should be made to MDEQ at 601.961.5171, or call MEMA's emergency line at 800-222-6362.

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