

ICYMI -- President Biden, FEMA Administrator Prioritize Life Safety as Hurricane Ida Makes Landfall

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WASHINGTON -- President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. briefed the media earlier today on federal agencies' preparedness and response efforts on Hurricane Ida, after receiving an update briefing at FEMA's National Response Coordination Center. Life safety is FEMA's main priority as dangerous wind, storm surge and flooding continue to threaten the Gulf Coast. The President urged those in the storm's path to take it seriously.



“The storm is life-threatening, and its devastation is likely to be immense. Everyone should listen to the instructions of state and local officials,” warned the President. He went on to speak directly to those in the hurricane's path.





“To the people on the Gulf Coast, I want you to know that we are praying for the best, planning and prepared for the worst.”



FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell joined [Fox News](#) today to discuss some of FEMA's preparations and priorities.

“Our most important concern as we go into the post-storm is life-safety. We anticipate there will be some water rescues that will need to happen,” said Administrator Criswell. “There are search and rescue resources already in place from the state as well as some additional federal assets. We want to take care of those people getting caught in the flooding, storm surge and in the hospital system.”

Later this evening Administrator Criswell joined NPR and addressed concerns about hospital preparations in the impacted areas.

“We have been working with Louisiana to help relieve some of the stress that they were experiencing in the hospitals as a result of COVID. So what that means is we



do have some additional personnel that are in the area supporting these hospitals right now. But we are also surging in,” the Administrator said. “What’s in the area right now are additional ambulances, both ground ambulances and air ambulances, so we can move patients from one hospital to another within the state. But we’re also making plans to evacuate patients out of state if necessary.”

FEMA’s Acting Associate Administrator for Response and Recovery, David Bibo, spoke on MSNBC about the dangers of Hurricane Ida.



“Hurricane Ida is a very dangerous storm that made landfall, with 150-mile-an-hour winds in Port Fourchon, La. It’s a very dangerous storm that people throughout southeastern Louisiana and southwestern Mississippi need to take extremely seriously right now,” said Bibo.

“Heed the words of the mayor, the governor and other local officials who are telling folks to hunker down to stay inside, don't take any risks. If you still have power, make sure you plug your phone in, make sure you are charging your devices, filling up the bathtub with water so you can flush the toilet and do other essential things. Those critical protective actions are really important right now.”

Bibo went on to describe the extensive preparations FEMA made ahead of the storm.



“We have been positioning [assets] in support of the states of Louisiana and Mississippi for days, moving specialized teams like search and rescue, incident management assistance teams, power restoration assessment teams and supplies like meals, water, generators, tarps, cots to be able to support Louisiana and Mississippi teams as soon as it's safe to do so.”

On CNN, Mr. Bibo underscored the instructions FEMA received during the President’s visit



"The President's message was clear as a bell to the FEMA team, which was lean forward and do everything you can to support the people of Louisiana, Mississippi and anyone else affected by Hurricane Ida. We've been pre-positioning for days throughout the projected area of impact."

For more information on federal Hurricane Ida preparedness and response visit [Hurricane Ida | FEMA.gov](https://www.fema.gov/hurricane-ida).

