



### *Mississippi Recovery Efforts Five Years After Katrina*

Five years ago, Hurricane Katrina devastated communities throughout Mississippi, and along the Gulf Coast. Under the leadership of the Obama Administration, the Federal Emergency Management Agency has launched a number of initiatives to improve the pace of ongoing recovery efforts and help rebuild the communities that are the economic engines of the Gulf Coast. All of these efforts have focused on finding innovative solutions to better support state and local officials, remove bureaucratic red tape, and help residents move forward.

Over the last five years, more than 45,230 displaced Mississippi families, formerly residing in FEMA-provided housing, have returned to longer-term housing. FEMA has provided more than \$3.1 billion to Mississippi to save lives, protect public health and safety, prevent damage to public and private property, and permanently repair or replace infrastructure damaged or destroyed by the hurricanes.

In the last 18 months, more than \$170 million has been funded by the Administration to continue the repair and rebuilding of Mississippi projects. This is due in large part to this Administration's commitment to putting innovative solutions in place.

#### ***STREAMLINED PROCESS TO ACCELERATE RECOVERY***

In the years immediately following Hurricane Katrina, many recovery projects were held up because of disagreements and an inefficient process for settling them. To make this process quicker, fairer and free up funds to get projects moving forward again, the Obama Administration and FEMA announced a new arbitration process to expedite resolution of outstanding public assistance projects in Mississippi from Hurricane Katrina. Under this new process, neutral, third-party panels adjudicate disputes – allowing some of the most difficult and complex disputes to get resolved. This is an alternative to the previous bureaucratic appeals process. To date, nine Mississippi projects have been submitted through the Arbitration process. Six projects have been resolved identifying more than \$24 million in funds to support Mississippi recovery.

#### ***ECONOMIC RELIEF FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS***

To provide greater economic relief for cash-strapped local governments hit hard by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, in March 2009 Secretary Napolitano announced additional flexibility for an existing federal program that lends funds to communities following a disaster to continue providing key municipal services that they otherwise would not be able to afford. Under the Obama Administration's initiative, FEMA has the authority provided by Congress to cancel the loans, called Special Community Disaster Loans, for eligible local governments in Louisiana and Mississippi that received them after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. In order to be eligible for the loan cancellation, governments' revenues in the three fiscal years after the disaster must have been insufficient to cover their operating budgets

#### ***INITIATIVES***

Under the leadership of Administrator Fugate, a number of new initiatives have been put in place better serve the American people and their communities before, during and after a disaster.

For more information on FEMA initiatives, visit [www.fema.gov/rebuildinglives](http://www.fema.gov/rebuildinglives).

#### *Katrina Recovery: Mississippi 2005-2010*

- ◆ 518,100 Mississippians registered for assistance
- ◆ \$1.3 billion distributed to families and individuals
- ◆ \$1.14 billion reimbursed to Mississippi to save lives, protect property and remove debris
- ◆ \$1.86 billion obligated to help communities repair and rebuild
- ◆ \$294 million to mitigate against future damages