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WORLDNETDAILY

IN KATRINA'S WAKE
FEMA chief fired
from previous job

Michael Brown oversaw horse shows, had no significant disaster experience

Posted: September 5, 2005
2:24 p.m. Eastern

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The Federal Emergency Management Agency official in charge of the New Orleans rescue was fired from his last private-sector job overseeing horse shows.

And before joining FEMA as a deputy director in 2001, Mike Brown, the Republican Party activist, had no significant experience that would have qualified him for the position. But the Oklahoman got the job through an old college friend who at the time was heading up FEMA.

"I look at FEMA and I shake my head," a furious Gov. Mitt Romney told the Boston Herald, calling the response "an embarrassment."

Even President Bush, after touring the devastated area, said he was "not satisfied" with the emergency



FEMA Director Michael Brown

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response to Hurricane Katrina's devastation. Members of Congress predicted there would be hearings on Capitol Hill over the mishandled operation.

Brown – formerly an estates and family lawyer – this week has made several public admissions, including interviews where he suggested FEMA was unaware of the misery and desperation of refugees stranded at the New Orleans convention center.

Before joining the Bush administration in 2001, Brown spent 11 years as the commissioner of judges and stewards for the International Arabian Horse Association, a breeders' and horse-show organization based in Colorado.

"We do disciplinary actions, certification of (show trial) judges. We hold classes to train people to become judges and stewards. And we keep records," explained a spokeswoman for the IAHA commissioner's office. "This was his full-time job ... for 11 years," she added.

Brown was forced out of the position after a spate of lawsuits over alleged supervision failures.

"He was asked to resign," Bill Pennington, president of the IAHA at the time.

Soon after, Brown was invited to join the administration by his old Oklahoma college roommate Joseph Allbaugh, the previous head of FEMA until he quit in 2003 to work for the president's re-election campaign.

The White House last night defended Brown's appointment. A spokesman noted Brown served as FEMA deputy director and general counsel before taking the top job, and that he has now overseen the response to "more than 164 declared disasters and emergencies," including last year's record-setting hurricane season.

As [WorldNetDaily reported](#), New Orleans' local newspaper, the [Times-Picayune](#), is blasting President Bush for his handling of response to Hurricane Katrina, and is calling for heads to roll within his administration.

"Every official at the Federal Emergency Management Agency should be fired, Director Michael Brown especially," the paper stated in an open letter to Bush in its Sunday edition.

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That last one is real -- not satire but straight from FEMA's website.

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DAILY KOS

Why FEMA turned away help

by **Ducktape**

Mon Sep 5th, 2005 at 07:55:38 PDT

For days after the disaster, help and volunteers of all sorts headed for New Orleans with relief supplies and expertise, only to be stopped and turned away by FEMA.

Last night, one of my friends joined our regular Sunday chat. He had just come home from New Orleans with his group of volunteer firefighters from Houston, after they had waited outside New Orleans for since **Tuesday** for FEMA to let them help in New Orleans, or use them somewhere else in the stricken region.

FEMA's "reason" -- they wouldn't let anyone in "until the National Guard has secured the city." The details of his experience are below the fold.

Ducktape's diary :: ::

Bill is a member of a volunteer firefighter team in the Houston area. He and his team have a lot of experience helping after hurricanes. And they also have special expertise -- a lot of them work for a living on oil infrastructure and repairs. Bill is a professional logistics expert whose assignments have included getting a client's tsunami-flattened distribution facility back operating within a couple of weeks, and pre-invasion logistics work in Kuwait.

On Monday night, his group assembled their rescue equipment and tools, and packed them into their boats along with all the emergency supplies they could carry. By Tuesday morning,

they were almost to New Orleans. "We were stopped at gunpoint by FEMA and told to turn back," he told me. When I asked, he clarified that they did not point the guns at them, but they were carrying and displaying their weapons.

FEMA told him that no one was allowed to enter the city to help "until it was secured by the National Guard." The Houston team asked if they could wait. The FEMA staff told them yes, but that they shouldn't expect anything to change.

So they set up camp in the parking area where they had been stopped, and they waited. By Thursday night, when they were still waiting in the same place, some of the team returned to Houston. The rest decided to wait longer. And still nothing changed, so the remaining team members returned to Houston on Saturday night.

Needless to say, Bill is livid about this. I asked him why they had not been sent to some of the other communities in the hurricane-stricken area where security was not as much of an issue.

"We asked," he told me, "but they said that our expertise was more needed in the New Orleans area." The fucking catch-22 -- they were needed in New Orleans, so they weren't allowed to go elsewhere, but they weren't allowed to go into New Orleans, so the upshot was that they did nothing except sit and wait, and then go home in frustration.

What had him frosted more than anything else is that they also have very specific expertise, as individual professionals as well as a firefighter team, in dealing with damage to oil infrastructure in the aftermath of a natural disaster. "We've been doing this more than 10 years," he told me. "We are not amateurs, and we have an enormous amount of experience with areas which have been hit by hurricanes."

"A lot of the damaged oil facilities aren't even in the city of New Orleans itself," he told me,

"so they weren't in an area that you would think would have looters or security problems that were different from any hurricane we've worked in. We're used to arriving and immediately going to work."

They didn't just sit and wait -- they kept going back to the FEMA people who were holding them up and making suggestions about how and where they could be useful. But FEMA had no interest in listening, and the line never changed. "You can wait if you wish, but don't expect any change anytime soon. Or you can go home."

You know all that "help is on the way" BS that was spouted? A lot of it wasn't just "on the way" -- it was already there, but blocked from doing anything because of FEMA.

We've heard so much of this over this past week, of help and supplies arriving and not being allowed in, of the USS Bataan cruising off the city with helicopters, medical facilities, and supplies, but doing nothing because they hadn't been asked to help.

I thought my outrage meter was already off the dial, but I discovered it had new levels when I heard the first-hand account from a friend who had left work for a week to bring specific expertise to the disaster, and who was among the thousands of such people blocked by FEMA and their incompetent bureaucracy from doing anything at all.

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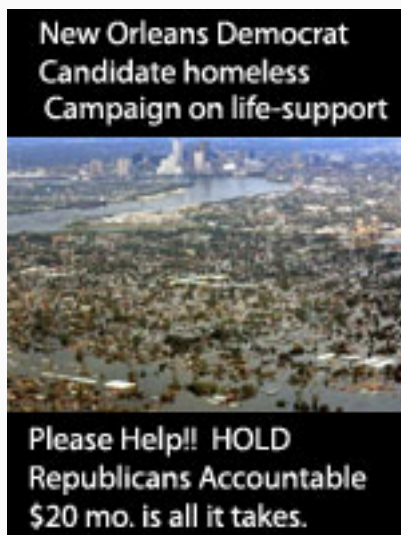
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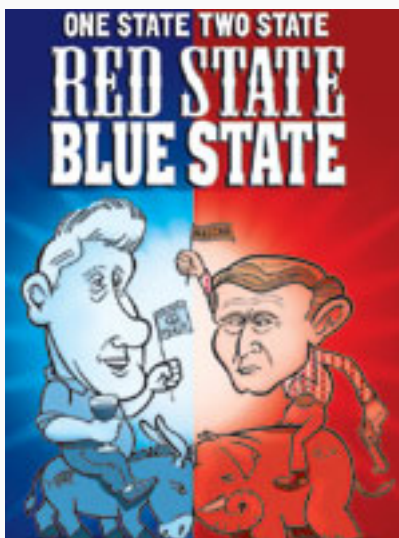
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Pittsburgh, Pa.

Tuesday, Sept. 13, 2005

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U.S. News

Homeland Security won't let Red Cross deliver food

Saturday, September 03, 2005

By Ann Rodgers, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

As the National Guard delivered food to the New Orleans convention center yesterday, American Red Cross officials said that federal emergency management authorities would not allow them to do the same.

Other relief agencies say the area is so damaged and dangerous that they doubted they could conduct mass feeding there now.

"The Homeland Security Department has requested and continues to request that the American Red Cross not come back into New Orleans," said Renita Hosler, spokeswoman for the Red Cross.

"Right now access is controlled by the National Guard and local authorities. We have been at the table every single day [asking for access]. We cannot get into New Orleans against their orders."

Calls to the Department of Homeland Security and its subagency, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, were not returned yesterday.

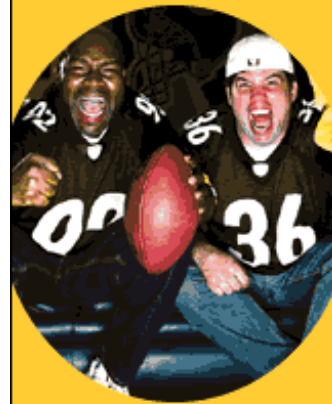
Though frustrated, Hosler understood the reasons. The goal is to move people out of an uninhabitable city, and relief operations might keep them there. Security is so bad that she fears feeding stations might get ransacked.

"It's not about fault and blame right now. The situation is like an hourglass, and we are in the smallest part right now. Everything is trying to get through it," she said. "They're trying to help people get out."

Obstacles in downtown New Orleans have stymied rescuers who got there. The Salvation Army has two of its officers trapped with more than 200 people -- three requiring dialysis -- in its own downtown building. They were alerted by a 30-second plea for food and water before the phone went dead.

On Wednesday, The Salvation Army rented three boats for a rescue operation. They knew the situation was desperate, and that their own people were inside, said Maj. Donna Hood, associate director of development for the Army.

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"The boats couldn't get through," she said. Although she doesn't know the details, she believes huge debris and electrical wires made passage impossible.

"We have 51 emergency canteens on the ground in the other affected areas. But where the need is greatest, in downtown New Orleans, there just is no access. That is the problem every relief group is facing," she said.

"America is obviously going to have to rethink disaster relief," said Jim Burton, director of volunteer mobilization for the North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

The Southern Baptists, who work under the Red Cross logo, are one of the largest, best-equipped providers of volunteer disaster relief in the United States. Most hot meals for disaster victims are cooked by Southern Baptist mobile kitchen units. Burton is a veteran of many hurricanes.

"Right now everybody is looking at FEMA and pointing fingers. Frankly, I have to tell you, I'm sympathetic. When in your lifetime have we experienced this? Even though we all do disaster scenario planning, we have to accept the reality that this is an extraordinary event. This is America's tsunami, that struck and ravaged America's most disaster-vulnerable city," he said.

Because New Orleans remains under water, it is different from other cities where Katrina struck harder, but where relief efforts are proceeding normally. Agencies place workers and supplies outside disaster areas before storms, to move in quickly. But there are always delays, Burton said, because nothing is deployed until experts survey the damage and decide where to most effectively put relief services.

The Southern Baptists operate more than 30 mobile kitchens that can each produce 5,000 to 25,000 meals daily, as well as mobile showers and communications trucks equipped with ham radios and cell phones. They are supporting refugee centers in Texas and Tennessee, and doing relief in Mississippi and Alabama. They have placed mobile kitchens around New Orleans to feed people as they come out.

Initially they tried to drive a tractor-trailer kitchen into New Orleans from Tennessee. It was stopped by the Mississippi Highway Patrol because the causeway it would have to cross had been destroyed, Burton said.

His agency has planned for missing bridges. The Southern Baptists' worst-case planning is for reaching Memphis after an earthquake on the New Madrid fault, which in 1812 whiplashed at a stone-crushing 8.1 on the Richter scale. Burton envisions the Mississippi without bridges.

So when state and local Southern Baptists raise money to build a mobile kitchen, he tells them to design it to be hoisted in by helicopter.

After Katrina, he thought he would have to airlift a feeding unit to one isolated town, but a road was cleared, he said. He doubts that dropping a kitchen into the New Orleans' poisoned waters, filled with raw sewage, dead bodies and possible industrial contaminants, would do any good. It made sense to prepare meals outside the area and truck them in or bring people out.

"The most important thing is to get the people out of that environment," he said.

He expects unusual problems to continue, because victims of Katrina flooding will need emergency food for far longer than the usual week or so. He's planning on at least two months.

Like the military, relief work requires a supply chain. Because business management favors just-in-time inventory, rather than stockpiling goods in warehouses, there isn't a huge stock of food to draw on, he said.

"When you go into a local area, it doesn't take long to wipe out the local food inventories," he said.

The Red Cross serves pre-packaged food, including self-heating "HeaterMeals" and snacks, that require no preparation. Yesterday the Red Cross was running evacuation shelters in 16 states, and on Thursday, the last day for which totals were available, served 170,000 meals and snacks in 24 hours.

While emergency shelters typically empty out days after a hurricane or other natural disaster, in Katrina's case they are becoming more crowded, Hosler said. People who had evacuated to the homes of relatives or hotels are moving in because they're out of money or want to be closer to what is left of their homes.

(Ann Rodgers can be reached at arodgers@post-gazette.com or 412-263-1416.)

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Top Stories

Disaster touches area residents

By JILL ZAREND-KUBATKO, Valley Life Editor

September 02, 2005

Email to a friend Voice your opinion

Many ways to aid victims

East of Casa Grande about 1,478 miles off the highly traversed Interstate 10 is the scene of one of the nation's worst natural disasters.

This distance doesn't matter to Casa Grande Valley residents who are personally affected by the catastrophe.

The damage dispensed by the unmerciful Category 4 hurricane known as "Katrina" on Monday - the breaking of levees gushing a torrent of water through the Big Easy in Louisiana, as well as obliterating shoreline towns in Alabama and Mississippi and displacing thousands of people - will take years to overcome.

Josea Cobb, building inspection secretary at Casa Grande City Hall, said Thursday her parents and relatives who live southwest of New Orleans are all fine. But the emotional devastation, they will carry forever.

"I went to school there and the places I know are no longer there. Just looking at it is devastating. My family's history is gone. The visual imagery, where their grandparents are from, are no longer there. My dad's family has been there for a very long time. His dad helped restore plantations, some of them have been affected. It's mostly the flooding that has affected them," said Cobb, who lived in New Orleans for a time.

When she was ready to attend school there, Cobb said she was to fly into the city from her home in Houston, but there was an impending hurricane. "I grew up knowing about it (hurricanes), the flooding and the rain and when I was in New Orleans, you knew about it, you just don't expect it," she added.

Cobb has taken many trips back to the Gulf Coast and recalls playing on the levee and swimming at beaches in Biloxi, Miss. "I remember visiting them and there is this huge levee. I used to think it was fun to run up to the top of it and now, just to know that it could break and flood these areas... it just feels weird. Lake Pontchartrain is so vast, it looks like the gulf. The bridge of I-10 is on pylons all the way into town. It's devastating. We used to go to the beaches there in Mississippi near Biloxi, they aren't there anymore. It's heartbreaking."

She said she has tried to stay away from newscasts covering the story, but it has been difficult. "When I was watching the news - I swore I would not do that - and seeing some of the stupidity that is going on... the devastation is one thing, but the stupidity that is going on is horrible, and the word is 'why?'" she asks of the looting and crimes being committed in this city of ruins.

Not all is bad though. "A friend from Phoenix called to see if my family needed for him to bring them back here to the Valley. People are asking what they can do for



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me, this hit me harder than watching the news. There are so many people who want to help. It reminds me that we are not as self-absorbed as the world thinks."

Tom Dudelston, a funeral director with J. Warren Funeral Services in Casa Grande, had hoped to use vacation to help those who could not escape the blighted area. "I'm trying to go," Dudelston said around 1 p.m. Thursday. "But I have hit some complications I had not expected. I was trying to offer my services with some of my skills. It is kind of pending. I was going to do it to help. I am still hoping I can get in there. I won't know until later today. I have talked with an organization here in Arizona that helps in situations like this. I was hoping I could circumvent that and take care of myself and get in there."

By 3:45 p.m. he had the news he didn't want to hear.

"I am not going anywhere, I spoke with D-MORT, a group of funeral directors and embalmers, and I cannot go," he said, his voice filled with disappointment.

The Associated Press displays daily images in newspapers and on Web sites featuring the dead lying on the ground or seated in chairs, with no one to tend to them. "USA Today talks about the body count and the things that are going on since it has been declared a national disaster area," he explained. "They won't let anyone in there. You have to be FEMA-certified and I am not," he said.

When a tragedy or disaster occurs in Arizona, trained, skilled people are allowed to help without Federal Emergency Management Agency certification, he said. "But when a national disaster is in effect, federal rules take over and FEMA would have to approve it," said Dudelston.

"It's kind of sad people are being turned away, the minute they go into a federal situation, they just can't get in there," he said. "The problem is when something like this happens - when an area is declared a national disaster - you can't go in there. They don't know them (trained volunteers) from Adam, so they can't let them in," he said of federal officials.

People usually hear of or see long lines of refugees in far-away African nations or other countries, not in America. But the scene of victims stranded from this disaster has become all too familiar on newscasts and splashed across newspaper front pages.

Wednesday, a couple and the man's 100-year-old mother made the 24-hour trek to Casa Grande to escape the wrath of Hurricane Katrina. They stopped in town on their way to California to stay with their son, said a receptionist with the Greater Casa Grande Chamber of Commerce. Another son works in a hotel on Canal Street, New Orleans, and they were waiting to hear from him.

Stephanie Adams, a programmer/analyst at Casa Grande City Hall, is devastated by what has happened to her family in Louisiana. "There are a couple of us here at City Hall whose families are now homeless, but, in view of the orders of the officials in the Orleans and Jefferson Parish area, no one can get in yet to even see if the homes are still standing," said Adams, who wished no further comment because she was too distraught.

A woman who works at First Presbyterian Church of Casa Grande also was too upset to talk about her daughter and family who were evacuated from the hard-hit area. Another church worker said the family left with five changes of clothing and a computer; their home was destroyed.

The Rev. Reid Holderby of Mount Zion Church in Casa Grande is suggesting to his congregation that people pray for the victims.

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The Rev. Bennett D.D. Burke, bishop, Liberal Catholic Diocese of Arizona, sent out an e-mail inviting members and friends of St. Michael and All Angels Liberal Catholic Cathedral, 545 E. Palm Park Blvd., Casa Grande, to Mass on Sunday at 9:30, with special prayers for the victims of the terrible tragedy.

"In response to what may be the worst natural disaster in our nation's history, I believe this is a time for Liberal Catholics and all people of faith to come together as a community to pray, to help those in need, to support each other in our struggle for understanding, and to remind ourselves of Christ's call to do two very important things - to love God, and to love our neighbors," said Burke.

"Be prepared to make a generous donation during our special "second collection," 100 percent of which will go toward relief efforts by professional assistance organizations," he said.

On Sept. 11 the church teen group will hold a bake sale after Mass to raise more funds for relief work.

"Many of us are inspired by events like this to go out and collect food, clothing, toiletries and other things which we imagine people will need. I applaud that impulse, and the compassion from which it arises. But the managers of this relief effort are discouraging such responses. With the massive flooding and displacement, and the damage to critical infrastructure like roads, ports and utilities, there is no practical way to deliver many of the things we might otherwise wish to collect and send. What the people of the Gulf Coast need, and what the disaster relief professionals need to help them, is money - lots of it," he said.

The United Way of Pinal County reminds residents that donations for hurricane relief can be made to the American Red Cross, the Salvation Army or the United Way. (www.unitedway.gov).

"In times of major distress, such as the catastrophic events caused by Hurricane Katrina, the best course of action is to provide the tools and resources necessary to assist the organizations who know how to deal with a disaster of this size," said Bill Ludeke, executive director of the United Way of Pinal County.

"Money is needed most in the early stages of responding to this disaster. Also, this is unfortunately a time when scams are perpetrated against a public that really wants to help. So we advise people to give only to well-known, reputable organizations, pay by check made payable to the agency, not to an individual," he advised.

American Red Cross volunteers have been deployed to the hardest-hit areas of Katrina's destruction, supplying hundreds of thousands of victims left homeless with critical necessities. With financial gifts to Hurricane 2005 Relief, the Red Cross can provide shelter, food, counseling and other assistance to those in need. Call 1-800-HELP NOW (435-7669) in English or 1-800-257-7575 in Spanish. Or visit www.redcross.org.

The Pinal Branch of the American Red Cross' address is P.O. Box 10502, Casa Grande, AZ 85230. Mail checks to this address or call (520) 836-0879.

The Southern Arizona Chapter of the Red Cross in Tucson also is asking for donations and volunteers. Make an online donation by visiting www.tucson-redcross.org or phone in a donation at 520-318-6740.

The Southern Arizona Chapter is seeking physicians, RNs, LPNs, LVNs and PAs

licensed in the state of Arizona to become members of the Disaster Health Services response teams. Blood donations are also needed.

Wal-Mart and Sam's Club gave \$1 million to the Salvation Army, said Capt. Jason Koenig, Casa Grande Salvation Army Corps officer and pastor.

"We find that local donations go great. We have been bombarded with calls," he said Thursday morning by phone. The best way to donate to the Salvation Army is to call 1-800-SAL-ARMY (725-2769) or visit the national Web site, www.salvationarmyusa.org, said Koenig.

To donate by mail, send checks, earmarked "disaster relief," to P.O. Box 4857, Jackson, MS 39296-4857 and visit local Wal-Mart or Sam's Clubs to give to the Salvation Army's Hurricane Katrina relief effort.

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul National Council has issued an urgent call for disaster funds to immediately send to the society's offices in Mississippi, Alabama and Louisiana, for direct aid to the victims of the disaster affecting millions of Americans. Contributions may be sent to The National Council, Society of St. Vincent de Paul, 58 Progress Pkwy., St. Louis, MO 63043-3706; or make credit card donations online at www.svdpusa.org, via the "Tribute" function.

By visiting the Web site www.networkforgood.org, those seeking an outlet to help pets and people can find information on how to donate to organizations such as Noah's Wish, the Humane Society, Habitat for Humanity and others.

FEMA links also can be found at this site.

America West Airlines, based in Tempe, will allow Flight Fund members to donate their air miles to those joining in the relief effort. Call 480-693-0800 or visit www.americawest.com.

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Reader Opinions:

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▶ Norma DeCamp

Sep, 08 2005

Go to FEMA'S own website and you will see that they did not want help. <http://www.fema.gov/news/newsrelease.fema?id=18470> Something is rotten here. Many, many people wanted to help right from the beginning, and FEMA WAS TURNING THEM AWAY. It is almost like another Waco. While we all stand by and feel we cannot do anything. This is not help, this is murder. People died here for lack of help. Lots of people. God help us if we do not look into why. If there is space, I will print what FEMA SAID ON THEIR ON WEB SITE. They turned away tons of help that would have saved lives by the thousands.

WASHINGTON D.C. -- Michael D. Brown, Under Secretary of Homeland Security for Emergency Preparedness and Response and head of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), today urged all fire and emergency services departments not to respond to counties and states affected by Hurricane Katrina without being requested and lawfully dispatched by state and local authorities under mutual aid agreements and the Emergency Management Assistance Compact.

"The response to Hurricane Katrina must be well coordinated between federal, state and local officials to most effectively protect life and property," Brown said. "We appreciate the willingness and generosity of our Nation's first responders to deploy during disasters. But such efforts must be coordinated so that fire-rescue efforts are the most effective possible."

The U.S. Fire Administration, part of FEMA, asks that fire and emergency services organizations remain in contact with their local and state emergency management agency officials for updates on requirements in the affected areas.

"It is critical that fire and emergency departments across the country remain in their jurisdictions until such time as the affected states request assistance," said U.S. Fire Administrator R. David Paulison. "State and local mutual aid agreements are in place as is the Emergency Management Assistance Compact and those mechanisms will be used to request and task resources needed in the affected areas."

Paulison said the National Incident Management System is being used during the response to Hurricane Katrina and that self-dispatching volunteer assistance could significantly complicate the response and recovery effort.

FEMA prepares the nation for all hazards and manages federal response and recovery efforts following any national incident. FEMA also initiates mitigation activities, trains first responders, works with state and local emergency managers, and manages the National Flood Insurance Program and the U.S. Fire Administration. FEMA became part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security on March 1, 2003.

SO MUCH FOR "HOMELAND SECURITY"

► **Sandy Mozingo**

Sep, 08 2005

Did anyone else hear that all the prisoners in a facility near LA (i think) were let go on their own because they couldn't be evacuated in-mass?? Do you think some of them were doing the shooting so they could control their looting area? Also, the anger welled up when I heard the media describe black people coming out of stores with clothes or food as LOOTERS! But a white person coming out of a store dragging food & water "FOUND" FOOD! The pictures showed young black men coming out of a store with clothing & threatened to shoot them! Clothes! Not jewelry, not computers, or watches; clothes! Needed items to survive. Clothes & shoes were next in importance to survival right after food & water. This whole bloody fiasco is a crime & I hope all responsible parties are held accountable! Especially the number one "Cowboy Who Would Be King!"

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DAILY KOS

Just to give you a sense of just how badly FEMA has f*cked up.

by [pelican](#)

Sat Sep 3rd, 2005 at 14:17:18 PDT

This was posted by a Clarkie over at the Securing America:

Just to give you a sense of just how badly FEMA has f*cked up.

Posted by Clark Warner on September 3, 2005 - 2:23pm.

This is beyond my comprehension and after spending two frustrating days trying to just get someone to let us help we've FINNALLY been told we can conduct "renegade" boat rescues via the just concluded press conference that Gov. Blanco just held.

Why is this JUST NOW being allowed? Well let's start from the very beginning.

On Wednesday morning a group of approximately 1,000 citizens pulling 500 boats left the Acadiana Mall in Lafayette in the early morning and headed to New Orleans with a police escort from the Jefferson Parish Sheriff's Department. The flotillia of trucks pulling boats stretched over FIVE miles.

This citizen rescue group was organized by La. State Senator, Nick Gautreaux from Vermilion Parish. The group was comprised of experienced boaters, licensed fishermen and hunters, people who have spent their entire adult life and teenage years on the waterways of Louisiana.

More below the fold

[pelican's diary](#) :: ::

The State Police waved the flotillia of trucks/boats through the barricades in LaPlace and we sped into New Orleans via I-10 until past the airport and near the Clearview exit. At that time we were stopped by agents of the FEMA controlled La. Dept. of Wildlife & Fisheries.

A young DWF agent strolled through the boats and told approximately half of the citizens that their boats were too large because the water had dropped during the night and that they should turn around and go home.

They were pulling a large (24ft) shallow draft aluminum boat that can safely carry 12 passengers and had ramp access which would allow the elderly and infirm to have easier access to the boat. They then politely informed the DWF agent that the local and national media had consistently reported that the water level had risen during the night which contradicted his statement to them that the water was dropping and no boat over 16ft. in length would be allowed to participate in rescue operations.

They then specifically asked the DWF agent that they (and other citizens in the flotillia) be allowed to go to the hospitals and help evacuate the sick and the doctors and nurses stranded there. They offered to bring these people back to Lafayette, in our own vehicles, in order to ensure that they received proper and prompt medical care.

The DWF agent did not want to hear this and ordered them home -- ALL FIVE HUNDRED BOATS. They complied with the DWF agent's orders, turned around and headed back to Lafayette along with half of the flotillia. However, two friends were pulling a smaller 15ft alumaweld with a 25 hp. The DWF agents let them through to proceed to the rescue operation launch site.

They were allowed to drive to the launch site where the FEMA controlled La. Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries were launching their rescue operations (via boat). They reported to me that there were over 200 DWF agents just standing around and doing nothing. They were kept there for approximately 3 hours. During that time they observed a large number of DWF agents doing absolutely nothing. Why? Because FEMA would not let them HELP! After three hours had passed they were told that they were not needed and should go home. They complied with the DWF's orders and turned around and went home to Lafayette.

Watching CNN later that night, there was a telephone interview with a Nurse trapped in Charity Hospital in New Orleans. She said that there were over 1,000 people trapped inside of the hospital and that the doctors and nurses had zero medical supplies, no diesel to run the generators and that only three people had been rescued from the hospital since the Hurricane hit!

I can't come up with one logical reason why the DWF sent this large group of 500 boats/1000 men home when we surely could have rescued most, if not all, of the people trapped in Charity Hospital. Further, we had the means to immediately transport these people to hospitals in Southwest Louisiana.

On Tuesday afternoon, August 30, Jefferson Parish Sheriff Harry Lee asked for all citizens with boats to come to the aid of Jefferson Parish. A short time later Dwight Landreneau, the head of the La. Depart. of Wildlife and Fisheries, got on television and remarked that his agency had things under control and citizen help was not needed. Apparently, Sheriff Lee did not agree with that assessment and had one of his deputies provide the Lafayette flotilla with an escort into Jefferson Parish.

Sheriff Lee and Senator Gautreaux - 1000 of Louisiana's citizens responded to the public's pleas for help. They were prevented from helping by Dwight Landreneau's agency, the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries which had been taken over by FEMA. When I learned that Charity Hospital has not been evacuated and that no one has been there to attempt a rescue, I became angry.

It was because of this that my friend and I have been trying launch boats both yesterday and today but to no avail. It looks like FINALLY the Governor has just said SCREW FEMA, get those boats in the water and help save my citizens.

So I think we'll be in the water tomorrow to help but for now I'm immensely frustrated.

If there is anyone on the CCN that is in the Baton Rouge area we are meeting today at the LA State Dem Party HQ at 2pm CST to game out tomorrow.

<http://securingamerica.com/ccn/node/357#comment-6515>

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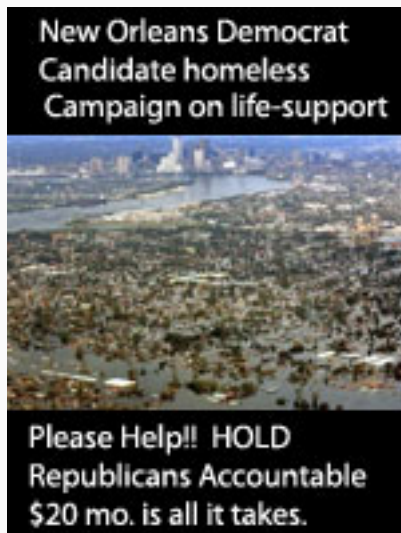
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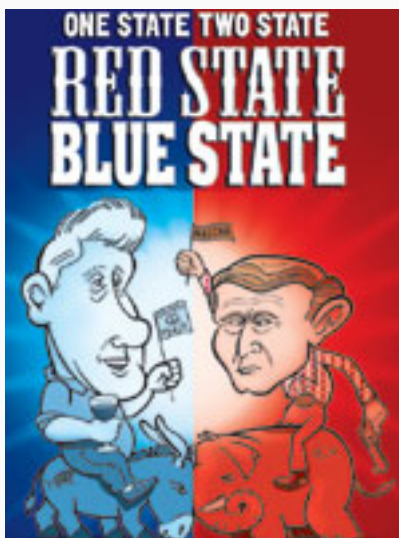
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Updates as they come in on Katrina

10:53 PM CDT on Tuesday, September 6, 2005

Tom Planchet

10:53 P.M. - (AP): As flood waters slowly receded by the inch Tuesday, New Orleans Mayor C. Ray Nagin authorized law enforcement officers and the U.S. military to force the evacuation of all residents who refuse to heed orders to leave the dark, dangerous city.

Nagin's emergency declaration released late Tuesday states that those who can be compelled to leave include people who are on private property or just don't wish to flee, unless they have been designated by government officials as helping with the relief effort. The move comes after some citizens informed authorities who had come to deliver them out of New Orleans that they would not leave their homes and property.

While acknowledging that the declaration had been made, police Capt. Marlon Defillo said when contacted late Tuesday that any forced removal of citizens had not yet begun. He said that those who were visiting homes were still reminding people that police may not be able to rescue them if they stay.

"That would be a P.R. nightmare for us," Defillo said of any forced evacuations. "That's an absolute last resort."

Repeated telephone calls to Nagin's spokeswoman, Tami Frazier, were not returned for comment.

9:28 P.M. - WASHINGTON (AP): The government's disaster chief waited until hours after Hurricane Katrina had already struck the Gulf Coast before asking his boss to dispatch 1,000 Homeland Security employees to the region -- and gave them two days to arrive, according to internal documents.

Michael Brown, director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, sought the approval from Homeland Security Secretary Mike Chertoff roughly five hours after Katrina made landfall on Aug. 29. Brown said that among duties of these employees was to "convey a positive image" about the government's response for victims.

Before then, FEMA had positioned smaller rescue and communications teams across the Gulf Coast. But officials acknowledged Tuesday the first department-wide appeal for help came only as the storm raged.

Brown's memo to Chertoff described Katrina as "this near catastrophic event" but otherwise lacked any urgent language. The memo politely ended, "Thank you for your consideration in helping us to meet our responsibilities."

[Full story](#)

9:23 P.M. - (AP): St. Bernard Parish -- nearly completely submerged by Hurricane

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Katrina -- dashed some hopes that life would return to normal anytime soon, announcing that children probably won't be able to return to the parish's schools this school year.

New Orleans' school system was devastated by the storm, and officials are still just trying to piece together financial records. But the city's neighboring parishes also were hard hit, with students in most areas urged to enroll in schools where they evacuated until power can be restored, water can be drained and schools are decontaminated.

[Full story](#)

9:21 P.M. - (AP): Within a week after news and images of the chaos left by Hurricane Katrina were broadcast, Americans donated over half a billion dollars to charities aiding victims of the flood.

The speed of the money raised has outpaced the rate of donations offered to victims of the 2001 terror attacks and could hit \$1 billion, according Stacy Palmer, editor of The Chronicle of Philanthropy, a publication that tracks nonprofit organizations.

"It is unprecedented in scale and speed," Palmer said.

"This outpaces anything we have had," said Ryland Dodge, spokesman with the American Red Cross. "The 9-11 donations ended up being \$1 billion dollars (collected) over a long period of time."

By far the largest single corporate donation has come from Wal-Mart, the retail giant, which donated \$17 million late last week. In addition, the Walton Family Foundation, a foundation created by the family of the founder of Wal-Mart, donated \$15 million to a variety of organizations.

8:17 P.M. - BATON ROUGE (AP): A reporter for the St. Petersburg Times newspaper was shot and wounded while covering the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in Baton Rouge, La., the newspaper said Tuesday.

Marcus Franklin, 34, was shot on Monday night. He was released after being treated at the Baton Rouge General Hospital. Doctors decided that removing the bullet was too risky, the newspaper said.

Franklin had been reporting on evacuees returning to their homes in Jefferson Parish near New Orleans. He said he was on his way back to his motel in Baton Rouge at 11:30 p.m. when he stopped at a stop sign at a dimly lit intersection in a residential area.

He had his windows rolled down and his air conditioning off to save gas. Suddenly a man with a black revolver appeared and asked how much money he had, Franklin said.

"I looked at the gun sort of in disbelief," Franklin said. "That's when I heard a pop ... It sounded like the proverbial firecracker."

After driving off he realized he had been shot in the stomach. He called 911 for police and emergency medical technicians. He spent the night in the hospital and was to be flown back to St. Petersburg on Tuesday.

7:30 P.M. - LAS VEGAS (AP): Some New Orleans firefighters were due to arrive Tuesday for casino vacations in a state gearing up to accept 800 or more Gulf Coast residents displaced by Hurricane Katrina.

Most of the 43 people including firefighters and family members were due to arrive at McCarran International Airport from Baton Rouge, La., and stay three nights at a hotel-casino off the Las Vegas Strip, officials said.

"These people need a chance to rest," city spokesman David Riggleman said after Mayor Oscar Goodman brokered a deal for rooms and meals at Las Vegas-based Station Casinos and flights with Allegiant Airlines. "They've been through a lot and they face a lot."

Officials said they expect the city will host up to 400 New Orleans police, firefighters and their families at hotel-casinos on and off the Las Vegas Strip.

Earlier on Tuesday, Gov. Kenny Guinn and local government and relief officials said they were preparing for the Federal Emergency Management Agency to fly 300 people to the Reno area on Wednesday, and a total of 500 to Las Vegas on Thursday and Monday.

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"By Thursday, we need to be ready for the first wave," Penney Towers, American Red Cross southern Nevada chapter executive director, told a news conference at the Clark County Government Center in Las Vegas.

"The recovery effort is long-term," Towers added. "We're looking at least a year."

The arrivals are part of a nationwide push to place Gulf Coast refugees of the Aug. 29 hurricane and provide rest for New Orleans police and firefighters traumatized by the loss of homes and colleagues.

7:26 P.M. - NASHVILLE, TN (AP): A person who survived Hurricane Katrina tried to kill themselves as they were being taken farther from disaster scene.

An evacuee made the suicide attempt while traveling on a flight from Houston to Washington D.C.

The United Express flight was diverted to Nashville.

A captain with the Tennessee Air National Guard says the flight had eight evacuees on board. She says she doesn't have any details about the suicide attempt.

The passenger who attempted suicide was taken to a hospital. Officials say that at the pilot's request, all passengers underwent a second security screening before the flight was resumed.

7:20 P.M. - BATON ROUGE (AP): Hurricane Katrina sank or grounded 110 barges, ships and boats -- 67 of them in the Mississippi River, and another 43 along the coast, a Coast Guard spokesman said Tuesday.

Petty Officer Larry Chambers had no further breakdown, or even an estimate on how many were barges and how many motorized vessels.

An obstruction -- he didn't know what it was -- at Southwest Pass, the main entrance to the river, kept ships with more than 35 feet of their hulls underwater from getting into the river, Chambers said. Some tankers and container ships can still get through, he said.

Another major difficulty was that the storm destroyed or blew away many of the markers showing the deepest part of the channel through the twisty river. Chambers didn't know what percentage was missing.

"Just extremely high," he said. "That's still in the survey stage as well, determining how many."

7:16 P.M. - (AP) -- The New Orleans police chief says some of his officers may still be trapped in their homes and he's not sure how many walked off the job.

Superintendent Eddie Compass spoke to CNN and NBC, saying that he can't make conclusions yet about why 500 police officers are no longer on the job.

The chief says the focus should be on the 12-hundred police officers who have been working under insurmountable conditions since the hurricane hit their city. He points to the lack of computers, electricity, food and water as well as the fact that officers have been shot at numerous times.

Compass calls that unprecedented and says his officers are heroes.

Meanwhile, the chief says the police force is still focusing on saving lives and if people refuse to leave their homes, police are prepared to force them out.

7:02 P.M. - ATLANTA (AP): Hundreds of firefighters have been sitting in Atlanta, playing cards and taking FEMA history classes, instead of doing what they came to do: help hurricane victims.

The volunteers traveled south and west from around the country, leaving their homes in places like Washington state, Pennsylvania and Michigan. They came after FEMA put out a call for two-thousand firefighters to help with community service.

Firefighters arrived, as told, with lifesaving equipment and sleeping bags.

But one of the waiting volunteers says it might have been better if they'd brought paper and cell phones. That's because some of the emergency responders are being told they will go to South Carolina, to do paperwork.

Others don't know where they'll be put in action.

The FEMA director in charge of firefighters says he's trying to get the volunteers deployed ASAP, but wants to make sure they go to the right place.

One firefighter points to nightly reports of hurricane victims asking how they were forgotten. He says, "we didn't forget, we're stuck in Atlanta drinking beer."

7:00 P.M. - LANCASTER, PA (AP): Twenty adults and 19 children showed up at Patricia and Timothy Edwards' house a few hours before dawn Sunday, and now it's their home, even if some have to sleep four to a bed.

Mattresses and sleeping bags are scattered everywhere, from the second floor to the basement and out onto the screened porch. The washing machine runs nearly nonstop, and meals are a major production -- cooked in restaurant-sized pots.

But it doesn't matter to the couple's relatives: They've managed to stick together no matter how far they've run from Hurricane Katrina and the devastation it caused their communities in southern Louisiana.

Patricia Edwards, a New Orleans native who works as a machinist in a Lancaster candy factory, opened her home to all her extended family after her 72-year-old mother, Beatrice Duplessis, told her they had nowhere to turn.

"I said, 'Wait a minute, stop right now.' I didn't think twice: 'Bring them all, I don't care,'" she said.

The Edwardses and their family are now living "like sardines in the can," Patricia Edwards said. But surprisingly, there is order amid the chaos -- thanks to the continual cleaning and organization and the new super-size approach to food (an applesauce container in the dining room was the size of a paint can).

For the hurricane refugees, the focus is now on assembling life's bare necessities -- as on Tuesday, when a neighbor's donation of new underwear, diapers and baby supplies was eagerly divided up.

6:57 P.M. - Kathleen Nolan, Cleco: Despite the damage we've seen, we're pleased with progress so far. 15,000 homes are back on line on the Northshore since Katrina hit; 65,000 still without power. 2,800 crewmen on the scene: will maintain that level of employee for the next several weeks.

6:54 P.M. - JACKSON, MS (AP): Long lines of confused and frustrated people seeking hurricane aid formed in Jackson on Tuesday, with some incorrectly sent into a shelter, causing it to double temporarily in size and the hurricane victims to lose their places in line.

Several hundred people lined up Tuesday morning at the Mississippi Trade Mart seeking food assistance and other aid from the local Department of Human Services.

"We heard if you needed vouchers for food -- come here," said Phylliss Thompson, a Rankin County resident.

As temperatures rose into the high 80s, Mayor Frank Melton appeared at the Trade Mart and directed many of the people in line to get out of the sun and into the nearby Mississippi Coliseum, which was being used as a Red Cross shelter.

Officials said 200 to 500 people moved to the Coliseum, where some got a meal but lost their place in line for aid.

"We were herded over there like cattle," said Iras Walker of Jackson.

The meal that the Red Cross handed out to those awaiting answers would not help feed her in the days and weeks to come, Walker said.

6:50 P.M. - STOCKBRIDGE, MI (AP): One of only 13 animal blood banks in the country has turned its attention to animals affected by Hurricane Katrina, shipping 25 units of dog blood to Louisiana State University's veterinary school.

Midwest Animal Blood Services in Stockbridge sent a third of its weekly production from 10 dogs to help the school care for pets evacuated from the New Orleans area. Blood donated by the bank's 62 cats could be headed to the Gulf Coast region next.

Anne Hale, board president for the Michigan Veterinary Medical Association and director of the blood bank 25 miles southeast of Lansing, has been in touch with veterinary medical assistance teams deployed to Louisiana and Mississippi.

She said Tuesday that many cats and dogs survived the hurricane's initial blow, but need blood to recover from heatstroke and serious injuries. Large farm animals either didn't survive or were evacuated ahead of time.

Many veterinary clinics in the Gulf Coast region lost their blood supply because blood couldn't be refrigerated in the wake of power outages, she said.

"Dogs and cats have needs, too," Hale added. "If people have healthy pets, now is the time for them to donate."

6:26 P.M. - AUSTIN (AP): Louisiana school teachers displaced to Texas by Hurricane Katrina could soon have jobs one state over. The Texas Education Agency is making special accommodations to allow retirees and displaced Louisiana teachers into classrooms.

Education Commissioner Shirley Neeley says that in the coming days and weeks she expects as many as 70,000 evacuee students to enroll in Texas schools.

More than 6,000 such students enrolled in Texas schools last week.

The Texas Board for Educator Certification today approved a measure that would expedite application and background checks on potential teachers.

Teaching certification records in Louisiana, which were kept online, were spared from the ravages of Hurricane Katrina.

Applications fees will be waived for Louisiana teachers looking for similar employment in Texas.

6:14 P.M. - Statement from Saints owner Tom Benson: "The entire New Orleans Saints organization would like to extend its prayers and best wishes to all of our fans throughout Louisiana and the Gulf South region. We are currently working with the NFL and expect to be in a position shortly to announce the sites for our remaining 2005 home schedule. I have expressed my desire to the NFL to play games in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, to the extent circumstances allow.

"Saints ticket holders unable to attend home games, wherever played, should also be assured that they will be permitted to request refunds. Specifics of the refund policy will be publicized in the upcoming days.

"The New Orleans Saints look forward to the start of the NFL regular season this Sunday and to having the Club be a source of pride and joy in these difficult days. As we move forward together, the Saints look forward to serving as a leader in the rebuilding and revitalization of our great community. Towards this effort, the Saints have established the 'New Orleans Saints Hurricane Katrina Relief Fund.' Further information for those individuals/companies interested in contributing will be announced shortly."

6:00 P.M. - Statement from U.S. Senator David Vitter: "Part of the hurricane rescue and relief effort that must happen is the return of businesses, jobs and economic opportunity to greater New Orleans. As a small part of this work, I've begun talking to businessmen and women from all walks of life and all parts of the region, encouraging them to be leaders on this front. And I've gotten great, positive responses.

"Today, I had a very good, reassuring conversation with Tom Benson about the need for all of us to join together in rebuilding Greater New Orleans, including its jobs and business base. In that conversation, Mr. Benson assured me of two things:

1. He is eager to maximize the number of Saints' home games which could be played in Tiger Stadium consistent with first meeting the medical, housing, and other needs of evacuees in the region.

2. He is eager for the Saints to return to New Orleans as soon as possible and for his organization to be part of our rebuilding effort and long-term future.

"I look forward to working with the Saints and other local businesses as we complete the immediate rescue efforts and move toward rebuilding southeast Louisiana."

5:30 P.M. - CHALMETTE (AP): In St. Bernard Parish, fatigued and frustrated authorities say they'll match their Hurricane Katrina devastation with anyone else's.

"If you dropped a bomb on this place, it couldn't be any worse than this," said Ron Silva, a district fire chief.

They said while federal help came slowly to New Orleans, it's even been slower to their outlying area of some 66,000 people on Louisiana's southeastern edge.

"It's Day 8, guys. Everything was diverted first to New Orleans, we understand that. But do you realize we got 18 to 20 feet of water from the storm, and we've still got 7 to 8 feet of water?" Silva said.

In addition to help from other Louisiana and Alabama departments, a Canadian task force of firefighters and police arrived four days after the storm to help, St. Bernard Fire Chief Thomas Stone said.

"If you can get a Canadian team here in four days, U.S. teams should be here faster than that," Stone said.

Rescue teams and other help has been arriving from around the country this week, but parish authorities say action is needed to reduce water levels.

Destruction swept the parish, throwing boats out of marinas and into the middle of two-story-home neighborhoods, leaving flipped-over cars with their rear bumpers resting against roofs, refrigerators atop roofs, and single-story homes with water to the roofs. There were several roofs with holes where residents apparently used axes to cut their way out.

The parish's fire department and sheriff's department have taken authority, commandeering heavy equipment and other vehicles for use to clear paths and evacuate people. The some 100 firefighters have been working virtually around the clock, Silva said, using their own vehicles, some of which now have engine damage from overuse and sea water.

Authorities say they're not ready to estimate numbers of dead: at least dozens, maybe more.

5:24 P.M. - Bob Johannsen, Dept. of Health and Hospital: 83 bodies have been recovered so far.

5:19 P.M. - (AP): Ohioans are working hard to have comfortable homes ready for hundreds of people displaced by Hurricane Katrina who are expected to begin arriving in the state later this week.

Red Cross and other charities across the state prepared short-term shelters at former military bases, schools and churches while local government officials made longer-term housing available for evacuees -- as many as 1,000 expected to begin arriving in Ohio on Thursday.

Cleveland Mayor Jane Campbell said the city will welcome with open arms 300 to 400 hurricane victims when they arrive sometime Thursday at Cleveland Hopkins International Airport.

The city will help with housing, food, education and jobs, but for the most part, Campbell said, "People want a hot shower more than anything else."

Some Ohioans offered their homes to hurricane victims needing shelter, but officials warned that kind of good-intended gift may not be the best idea.

5:18 P.M. - NEW YORK (AP): Michael Jackson has written a song to help raise funds for the victims of Hurricane Katrina and will soon record it.

Tentatively titled, "From the Bottom of My Heart," the singer plans to ask other musicians to join him in recording it.

Spokeswoman, Raymone K. Bain says Jackson hopes to record the song within two weeks in the style of "We Are the World," which he co-wrote and produced in 1985 to raise money for famine relief efforts in Africa.

Jackson has been mostly reclusive since he was acquitted of child molestation charges in California on June 13.

5:17 P.M. - WHITE HOUSE (AP): House Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi says she's told President Bush he should fire Michael Brown.

She says the Gulf Coast was hit with two disasters last week. First came Hurricane Katrina, then the response of Brown's Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Pelosi spoke to reporters after the president met with congressional leaders. Asked for his Bush's response, she said, "The president thanked me for my suggestion."

Brown has been the object of bipartisan criticism. Republican Senator Susan Collins of Maine says her committee will hold hearings next week.

However, Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist says he thinks the big problems with the federal response were structural -- and it's too soon to "call for people's heads."

5:14 P.M. - OLIVIA, MN (AP): It was a quick trip -- nearly 2,300 miles in 52 hours -- as six buses, a truck and a support vehicle drove from Minnesota to Louisiana and back with supplies for victims of Hurricane Katrina.

The caravan delivered 90-to-100-thousand pounds of food, water, diapers and hygiene items to Shreveport and Natchitoches.

Matt Holland of Olivia teamed with another driver to man one of the buses. He arrived home at 12:30 a.m. and got up five hours later to get back in the bus and bring students to school for the first day of classes in the BOLD School district.

Holland is manager of Palmer Bus Service, which provided four of the buses in the caravan. The other buses were from Prairie Bus Company and Westonka Bus Service.

In addition to Olivia, residents from Willmar, Bird Island, Glenwood, Mankato, Saint Peter, Alexandria, Starbuck, Saint Clair, Minneapolis and Saint Paul made the trip.

5:13 P.M. - MOBILE, AL (AP): A Coast Guard operations base is being set up at Gulfport, Mississippi, to provide help to local law enforcement agencies and search and rescue efforts.

A spokesman in Mobile says Coast Guard units are being combined to form Mississippi Coastal Recovery Base Gulfport as a result of the damage Hurricane Katrina caused along the Mississippi Coast.

The Coast Guard Station in Gulfport was destroyed by the hurricane.

At the new location, four Coast Guard cutters have joined the recovery effort.

Meanwhile, crews from former Coast Guard Station Gulfport are patrolling the waterways near Gulfport, providing shore-side security and assisting with search and rescue operations as needed.

5:07 P.M. - DALLAS (AP): Some Hurricane Katrina evacuees from Louisiana will get free school uniforms as they prepare to attend classes in Dallas.

The Dallas Stars and the Texas Rangers today donated \$25,000 to the Dallas Independent School District. The money will be used to buy school uniforms for some of the displaced children.

Thousands of evacuees are staying at Reunion Arena in downtown Dallas.

DISD requires school uniforms.

The teams are owned by Tom Hicks, who says the right clothes will help reassure and comfort the children as they face a new environment, new classmates and new teachers.

5:06 P.M. - FORT BRAGG, NC (AP): Soldiers from an engineering battalion at Fort Bragg are preparing to leave for Louisiana for duty with Joint Task Force Katrina, the hurricane relief effort spearheaded by North Carolina-based troops, the Army said Tuesday.

Members of the 618th Engineers were scheduled to depart in a convoy of trucks and heavy equipment, according to the 18th Airborne Corps.

More than 4,300 personnel, 700 vehicles and 24 aircraft from units under the 18th Airborne Corps -- including the 82nd Airborne Division soldiers dispatched Saturday -- are involved in the relief effort around New Orleans, the corps said.

In addition to infantry soldiers, the units include medical personnel, kitchen units, heavy trucks and water purification units.

5:05 P.M. - SAN DIEGO (AP): Nearly 80 Hurricane Katrina refugees are enjoying a bit of luxury at one of the city's most posh hotels.

The group spent Monday night free of charge in the Manchester Grand Hyatt San Diego, a giant waterfront hotel where rooms typically begin at \$200 a night. It's a big step up from the high school gymnasium where the evacuees spent the previous night.

Businessman David Perez brought the families Sunday from Baton Rouge to San Diego on a chartered Boeing 737. On Labor Day, Perez treated them to a barbecue dinner before they checked into their hotel rooms.

Perez, an oil-and-gas exploration company executive, offered to pay for the 30 rooms but the hotel donated four nights, meals included, said hotel general manager Ted Kanatas.

5:04 P.M. - PHOENIX (AP): State and school officials began making arrangements Tuesday to educate children who have found temporary shelter in an Arizona sports arena after being evacuated from the Gulf Coast, though enrollment for some in new schools may wait until their families find homes.

The parents of about 30 K-12 students registered Tuesday with state social-service workers at the shelter in Veterans Memorial Coliseum and began the process of transitioning temporarily or permanently into Arizona, Gov. Janet Napolitano's office said.

Children whose parents have given permission for them to attend an Arizona school could be in classes as early as Wednesday, but officials said some students will end up in districts other than the two serving the area around the coliseum.

5:02 P.M. - (AP): The thought of temporarily living aboard a cruise ship may be a vacation for some, but it's not even a last resort for many of Hurricane Katrina's victims who are living in the Astrodome. [Click here](#)

4:43 P.M. - BATON ROUGE (AP): Officials at LSU created a fund to help students directly affected by Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath. The fund was set up by the LSU Foundation to help students from southern Louisiana, school officials said.

Donations were being taken online at www.lsu.edu/lisufoundation and at the foundation's office.

Checks can be mailed to Hurricane Katrina-LSU Student Relief Fund, c/o LSU Foundation, 3838 W. Lakeshore Dr., Baton Rouge, LA 70808.

4:39 P.M.- (ABC News): Microbiologist finds flood waters in New Orleans' Ninth Ward to be 45,000 times what would be considered safe for swimming in a pond or a lake. [Click here](#).

4:37 P.M. - NEW YORK (AP): The fund set up by former Presidents Bush and Clinton to benefit survivors of Hurricane Katrina raised more than \$1 million in online donations during its first 24 hours, the ex-presidents said Tuesday.

"The immediate success of this fund is demonstrative of the great generosity of the American people," said Bush, who together with Clinton had announced the establishment of the Bush-Clinton Katrina Fund in Houston on Monday. "Recovery is going to take years: we need to help these Gulf Coast communities get back on their feet and we need to help these citizens get their lives back."

Clinton said in a joint statement, "I am so encouraged by the immense outpouring of donations from the American people. The spirit of America is astounding and I am constantly amazed by the fortitude and generosity of the citizens of this great country."

More than 30 corporate donations were pledged to the fund when it was announced, and since then more than 5,000 individuals have donated online.

On the Net: Bush-Clinton Katrina Fund <http://www.bushclintonkatrinafund.org>

4:35 P.M. - WASHINGTON (AP): The pain at the pump got a lot worse in the past week.

The Energy Department says the average retail price of regular gas jumped almost 46 cents a gallon in the week after Hurricane Katrina.

The Energy Information Administration says that pushed the price of a gallon to \$3.07. That's \$1.22 higher than a year ago.

EIA administrator Guy Caruso says gas prices should back off a little bit from record levels. But he told a Senate panel they'll remain relatively high. He expects gas will average \$2.60-a gallon at the pump in the third quarter of the year and \$2.40-a gallon the fourth quarter.

4:21 P.M. - NEWARK, NJ (AP): The first evacuees from Hurricane Katrina have started arriving in New Jersey.

The evacuees include nearly 30 members of an extended family with a boy who spent his 11th birthday in a hospital emergency room today.

One hundred more families are expected soon, bound for temporary quarters in a Perth Amboy housing complex.

The ebb and flow of victims and helpers picked up its pace today as doctors, nurses, police officers and firefighters either left or prepared to leave for the storm-stricken region.

The state is meanwhile getting some New Orleans residents who fled before the worst of the storm arrived.

27 members of an extended family arrived in Newark late last night and early this morning after driving from New Orleans.

4:18 P.M. - (AP): Hurricane Katrina has wrenched the lives of survivors, rescue workers and even a transfixed world that watched the catastrophe unfold.

Experts say many survivors will likely suffer significant psychological trauma. But officials also stress that people are remarkably resilient -- and that most who survived the storm and floodwaters won't be permanently impaired.

Psychologist Andrew Baum of the University of Pittsburgh studies reactions to disasters.

Baum says people do better than we expect them to.

Barry Hong is a psychiatry professor at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis.

Hong, who's studied flood survivors, guesses that maybe half the hurricane survivors might need counseling or other formal psychological treatment.

He thinks the other half may do fine on their own with help from family and friends.

4:15 P.M. - Entergy Spokesperson Renae Conley: 385,000 homes are now back on line, nearly, half of the 800,000 that were taken off-line when the crisis began.

4:14 P.M. - WASHINGTON (AP): Two New York lawmakers are working on a plan to give New Orleans and other Katrina-ravaged areas a tax incentive program similar to the one that New York businesses received after September 11, 2001.

Representative Peter King, a Republican, said today he is working with Representative Charles Rangel, a Democrat, on legislation that would create so-called empowerment zones for the affected areas.

King says he didn't have a price tag yet for the tax package, but he said he expected it to be bigger than the September 11 version.

New York was allotted about \$8 billion in tax incentives from the federal government, though some of those tax breaks went unused.

4:09 P.M. - BILOXI, MS (AP): Folk legend Paul Simon traveled to the Gulf Coast to launch "Operation Assist," a program to help storm devastated areas of Hurricane Katrina.

"I'm not down here as a song writer, but as someone to call attention to it, particularly in the smallest communities," Simon said Monday.

The program will provide emergency medical care to families in and around Biloxi. Two mobile medical clinics -- one from the Mississippi Children's Health Fund program in Clarksdale and the other from New York City -- have arrived.

"They are going to stay here for a long time," Simon said.

The clinics will treat all medical needs except those involving surgeries.

Simon described damage to the coast as "suffering on a Biblical scale."

The singer said he has family from the New Orleans area, and they lost everything because of Katrina. He said they are staying at a hotel in Pearl because that was as far as the gas would take them.

Simon is the co-founder of The Children's Health Fund, an organization that provides health care to medically underserved communities around the United States. The singer said he will also participate in a nationally televised benefit for storm victims at the end of the week.

4:07 P.M. - (AP): [The debate over the word "refugee."](#)

4:06 P.M. - BILOXI, MS (AP): Topping off the tank is taking on a whole new importance in Mississippi.

Gas remains somewhat hard to come by, with long lines at the few stations that are open.

But motorists driving by one Biloxi station couldn't help but notice how quickly the line was moving. It took most only about 15 minutes to get up to the pumps at Fayards and it wasn't clear why it moved so well.

One woman riding in the back seat of a car called it the best she'd seen yet.

It could be that people just weren't buying much. Some of the people who stopped in said they already had a half-tank or more, but figured they'd top off while the going was good.

4:05 P.M. - LACKLAND AIR FORCE BASE, TX (AP): The four-day airlift of hospital and nursing home patients from New Orleans to an Air Force base in Texas is over.

Some ten-thousand people were flown from Louis Armstrong International to Lackland Air Force Base over the four days of the airlift.

Air Force Flight Surgeon Major Philip Mason says medical teams, used to treating those wounded in war, had to resuscitate a number of the patients before and during the flights.

Mason says the most severely ill included those who recently had transplants, going without their daily medication for up to a week. He adds some of the patients had "absolutely nothing," while others were carrying their complete hospital files and wearing hospital ID bracelets.

3:59 P.M. - Randy Moffett, President of Southeastern University: We are accepting students from colleges that were rendered inoperable by Hurricane Katrina. Please call 985-549-2000 or go online at www.selu.edu for more information.

3:55 P.M. - WWL-TV: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers say they expect to drain New Orleans in 80 days.

3:50 P.M. - WASHINGTON (AP): Social Security cards, driver's licenses, credit cards and other personal documents are literally floating around New Orleans, raising the prospect some hurricane survivors could be victimized again -- this time by identity thieves.

Betsy Broder, the attorney who oversees the Federal Trade Commission's identity theft program, said the agency has not received any complaints yet. However, it's still early after the disaster and people have been focusing on more pressing needs, such as shelter, food and medicine.

"This is probably not the most immediate concern that people have, but at a certain point they need to stop and take stock of their financial health," Broder said Tuesday.

As survivors begin to rebuild their lives, she said, they can take steps to avoid becoming the victims of identity scammers. [Click here](#).

3:44 P.M. CAPITOL HILL (AP): Mississippi Senator Trent Lott says he's looking to the government to come up with innovative ways to help Gulf Coast residents quickly recover and rebuild.

Lott didn't want to blame anyone for the government's response to the disaster, saying he doesn't want to "bite the hand" that's trying to save him. His own home in Pascagoula, Mississippi, was destroyed by Hurricane Katrina.

But he did say it appears it was a mistake to move FEMA into the Department of Homeland Security.

He says FEMA should be a "freestanding agency reporting only to the president." That, he says, would help to eliminate bureaucratic delays in dealing with disasters.

3:41 P.M. - GONZALES (From WBRZ-TV, Baton Rouge): Ascension Parish authorities are investigating a shooting involving two Arizona sheriff's deputies.

Sheriff Jeff Wiley says it was "road rage" and deputies feared for their safety. The shooting occurred on Louisiana Highway 74 near Prairieville.

Wiley says the deputies, who were coming off duty from assisting in New Orleans, were in an unmarked vehicle, when a pickup truck with one person tried to cut them off as the highway narrowed to two lanes.

Wiley says pickup's driver made obscene gestures and made abrupt stops and swerved in front of the deputies.

Finally, the Maricopa County deputies turned on their red lights, but pickup did not stop.

A short time later, Wiley says the deputies found the pickup stopped in the middle of the road, and the driver was standing outside his truck. He says the passenger deputy got out and drew his weapon, identified himself as a police officer and told the guy to stay where he was.

Wiley says the guy in the pickup started coming toward the deputy and allegedly said -- quote -- "I don't care who your are, if you pull that gun your better use it."

The deputy fired one shot, intending to fire over the guy's head, but struck him in the face.

The pickup driver was taken to a hospital in Gonzales with a non-life threatening wound.

Wiley did not identified the victim.

3:38 P.M. - Landrieu: This is going to be the largest rebuilding effort in our nation's history, so we will have to shift our priorities in order to better spread out the billions of dollars that are coming into the area.

3:35 P.M. - Lt. Gov. Mitch Landrieu: All of the major evacuations have been completed. Those who wanted to get out, we believe, have gotten out. Now comes the decision about those who are staying behind.

3:32 P.M. - Gretna Mayor Ronnie Harris: We are going to work with Jefferson Parish in allowing people back in town.

3:31 P.M. - Harris: People around the country do not understand the threat to this entire nation that exists because of coastal erosion.

3:30 P.M. - Harris: I may be Mayor of Gretna, but Ray Nagin is my Mayor.

3:29 P.M. - Harris: The city of Baltimore is helping Gretna, a connection which goes back to the days of John McDonough.

3:28 P.M. - Harris: Ships wanting to get to New Orleans can use the Perry Street Wharf to unload goods.

3:27 P.M. - Harris: Until further notice, please do not drink any water that comes through your tap.

3:26 P.M. - Harris: I think FEMA must've disconnected their phone lines. It took them five days to get into Gretna with food and water. FEMA did great things when they were by themselves, but (combining them with) Homeland Security seems to have gummed them up.

3:20 P.M. - (Los Angeles Times): Six-year-old boy carries five-month-old while leading five other toddlers to safety. [Click here.](#)

3:17 P.M. - CHARLESTON, WV (AP): Another 134 New Orleans residents and at least seven dogs and one cat have arrived in West Virginia.

The residents and animals landed at Charleston Yeager's Airport shortly before 3 o'clock this afternoon aboard a commercial charter flight.

After a medical screening, some food, a shower and a change of clothes, they will be sent by bus to Camp Dawson, the state's National Guard training center.

Today's flight brings the number of people displaced by Hurricane Katrina and who are now in West Virginia to 346 people.

Governor Joe Manchin has pledged to take up to 500 New Orleans residents who need a temporary place to live.

West Virginia Major General Allen Tackett says he hopes that four of the five C-130's sent south will return with 175 New Orleans residents who are currently at Fort Smith, Arkansas.

Tackett says the people could be in West Virginia by this evening.

The fifth plane will remain in New Orleans to assist with cleanup efforts.

3:11 P.M. - (AP): "Its full of rot. Its full of chemicals. Its just the most revolting soup

you can imagine."

The description comes from a reporter trying to describe the stench from the water that fills the streets in much of New Orleans.

Warren Levinson of Associated Press Radio accompanied a search and rescue team door-to-door in one neighborhood today in the city. He reports that a number of people found alive in some apartment buildings were determined to stay, only to eventually agree to leave. One man says, after seeing the destruction, he's glad to be getting away.

Levinson reports that the smell that hit him and the searchers when they knocked down some apartment doors showed there is more in there "than rotting food." He adds there will be "some really awful discoveries when the waters finally recede."

3:10 P.M. - WHITE HOUSE (AP): President Bush says the administration is looking at ways to help schools absorb students displaced by Hurricane Katrina.

During a meeting with Education Secretary Margaret Spellings, the president said local school districts are extending "extraordinary efforts" right now to help kids learn.

Bush said he's sending his wife Laura to DeSoto County, Mississippi, tomorrow to talk to school officials about their problems.

At the same time, Bush promised that Washington is ready to show flexibility when it comes to college loans. He says Katrina has forced many college students to change plans, and the Education Department will show what he calls "loan forbearance."

3:05 P.M. - Orleans Parish Public School Superintendent Dr. Ora Watson:

Katrina, as ugly as it sounds, may have balanced our books...I can't imagine us starting back up with any more than 40,000 students (about two-thirds the usual number).

2:57 P.M. - TYLER, TX (AP): Texas Governor Rick Perry today reached out to Louisiana hurricane evacuees by visiting shelters in Killeen and Tyler. Perry was accompanied by his wife, First Lady Anita Perry, who's a nurse.

The first couple greeted some of the refugees at the Killeen Community Center. The Perrys later visited two shelters in Tyler -- at First Christian Church and at Green Acres Baptist Church. Those two churches -- together -- are housing about 250 evacuees.

Perry says Texans have been so gracious and giving, and he's really proud of the citizens of the state.

Nearly a quarter of a million evacuees are being sheltered and fed in Texas. Earlier today, plans to move some evacuees from the Houston Astrodome to cruise ships in Galveston -- have been put on hold. The refugees say they prefer to stay put.

2:54 P.M. - WASHINGTON (AP): Hurricane evacuees seeking food stamps in Texas started as a trickle and quickly turned into a torrent -- eight applications the first day mushroomed to more than 26,000 within four days. To varying degrees, the same story is playing out around the country as state and local governments take in Gulf Coast evacuees by the thousands, taxing social programs that in many cases already were stretched thin. [Click here.](#)

2:47 P.M. - WASHINGTON (AP): A triumvirate of Republican power brokers may give Mississippi first dibs in the post-Hurricane Katrina grab for federal disaster funds even though the federal government focused its initial response on New Orleans. [Click here.](#)

2:40 P.M. - BATON ROUGE (AP): Whether to snatch up a few personal photographs or simply to inspect their homes and cry, evacuated New Orleans residents should be allowed back to look at their damaged belongings, said a group of lawmakers who, in some cases, aren't sure about the conditions of their own homes.

"I understand why we can't stay. I understand there are health issues. But, you know, you want to get the photographs of your children and dry them out," said Rep. Peppi Bruneau, R-New Orleans, at a meeting of New Orleans area state and local officials.

New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin, however, is trying to get local residents who stayed behind to clear out when search and rescue boats or military troops make their house to house searches, warning that even when the water is pumped out of the city, a toxic, muddy mess would remain. Police and military blockades are keeping most people out

the city.

Residents who evacuated before Hurricane Katrina hit, who followed the directions of the mandatory evacuation, should know the status of their homes, lawmakers from New Orleans said, pointing to neighboring Jefferson Parish, where residents were allowed in, starting Monday to assess damage.

Lawmakers said repeatedly barring people from their homes may drive them to other areas -- and possibly states -- to set up permanent homes elsewhere. Sen. Diana Bajole, D-New Orleans, said in some instances, people need to get to their homes to protect them from fire. Fires have ignited around the city.

"It sounds simple, but somebody needs to turn the gas off. That's not something you normally think about when you leave the house," she said.

2:20 P.M. - WASHINGTON (AP): The military's growing contribution to hurricane relief efforts in Louisiana and Mississippi will not diminish its capability to fight the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld said Tuesday.

"Let me be clear: We have the forces, the capability and the intention to fully prosecute the global war on terror while responding to this unprecedented humanitarian crisis here at home. We can and will do both," Rumsfeld told a Pentagon news conference. [Click here](#)

2:17 P.M. - WWL-TV: New Orleans East could be dry by the end of the month, according to information from a press conference from the Office of Emergency Preparedness.

2:15 P.M. - WWL-TV: DOTD will begin fielding offers for rebuilding of the Twin spans Bridge this Friday, September 9.

2:07 P.M. - PORTLAND, OR (AP): -- Two to three hundred Oregon's National Guard are heading to Louisiana today. They are from the 41st Infantry out of Klamath Falls and Portland.

Captain Mike Braibish, a Guard spokesman, says the Oregon Guard will be working in the section of Jefferson Parish.

Braibish says it will be a real challenge since one-third of the area is dry and two-thirds is flooded.

By week's end, Braibish says they expect to have 1,500 Oregon National Guard in Louisiana.

2:05 P.M. - CARACAS, VENEZUELA (AP): Venezuela's Citgo Petroleum has set up disaster relief centers in Texas and Louisiana in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

Venezuela's emergency management director says the company's begun providing humanitarian aid to thousands of American victims. He says volunteers at Citgo refineries in Lake Charles and Corpus Christi, Texas, are providing medical care, food and water to about 5,000 people.

Meanwhile, he says volunteers from the company's Houston headquarters have provided similar help to some 40,000 victims.

Venezuela's oil minister also says the nation will send one million barrels of gasoline to the disaster zone as soon as possible.

The oil producing country is a major supplier to the United States. Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez is a close ally of Cuban leader Fidel Castro and a frequent critic of President Bush.

2:00 P.M. - BATON ROUGE (AP): As environmental officials begin their surveys, the dangers from Hurricane Katrina -- ranging from bacteria to heavy metals to gasoline -- lurk in floodwaters and below ground.

Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality secretary Mike McDaniel said among the concerns are bacteria, heavy metals and hazardous building materials in the floodwaters.

Below ground, there are over 6,000 gasoline tanks. Above ground, there are hundreds of

industrial plants that could release dangerous materials into the southeastern Louisiana environment.

McDaniel refused -- at least for now -- to characterize the floodwater in New Orleans as "toxic soup." That's a term used by many officials to describe what the floodwater would be before Katrina's devastating plunge through southeastern Louisiana. He says the term brought images of "instant death."

No matter what is in the water, he says it will have to go back into Lake Pontchartrain. [Click here.](#)

1:58 P.M. - (AP): Amid all of the hardships, the devastation and the warnings, there are still those who refuse to leave their homes in New Orleans.

One man, 69-year-old John Ebanks, sits on his porch with his dog, watching the rescue boats go by. He has plenty of supplies with him, including a lot of mosquito spray. And he says he's not going anywhere. Ebanks says, "You've got to protect your property." He says he's too old to start over.

A rescue team warned him that the water around his house was so bad, "the fish are dying." When he refused to go with them, they wrote down his name and moved on.

The water is as high as seven feet in some neighborhoods, and it's tainted from decomposing bodies, fuel and refuse. A member of the Kentucky Air National Guard says he tells people the water is "pretty much sewer water at this point."

Some of the holdouts have pets they refuse to leave behind.

One man, angry at police who told him he had to leave, asked, "Where were they during the hurricane?" He says, "I was born and raised here and I pay taxes. They can't make me leave."

1:55 P.M. - BATON ROUGE (AP): As environmental officials begin their surveys, the dangers from Hurricane Katrina -- ranging from bacteria to heavy metals to gasoline -- lurk in floodwaters and below ground.

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1:49 P.M. - WASHINGTON (AP): Public health officials expressed concern Tuesday about possible chemical contamination of waters flooding New Orleans in Hurricane Katrina's wake, saying no one yet knows if industrial leaks occurred.

A task force led by medical and environmental authorities has begun work, based at a still-operating hospital in the flooded city, to monitor for disease outbreaks and "begin to make judgments about when New Orleans is safe to reinhabit," said Health and Human Services Secretary Mike Leavitt.

There are scattered reports of diarrheal diseases in shelters housing evacuees from New Orleans and coastal Mississippi. It's not yet clear if diseases were spread in the shelters or whether people arrived already ill, said Dr. Julie Gerberding, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

But, "right now, so far so good," she said of the shelters' ability to prevent disease outbreaks.

1:47 P.M. - WASHINGTON (AP): President Bush intends to seek \$40 billion as the next installment for hurricane relief and recovery, according to a congressional official.

1:45 P.M. - Lisa Guidry, Project Noah: Asking those who are home-schooling to get in touch with their program, www.projectnoah.org

1:44 P.M. - WASHINGTON (AP): The Labor Department is releasing up to \$75 million to Texas to provide services to Hurricane Katrina evacuees.

Waco Congressman Chet Edwards today announced the federal money will be going to the Texas Workforce Commission.

Nearly a quarter of a million Louisiana evacuees have made their way to Texas -- staying in shelters, hotels, motels and other centers. More than \$23 million will be made available -- immediately.

The money is part of a national emergency grant meant to provide temporary employment for people to assist with disaster relief efforts.

The funds also can be used for short-term vocational training that help be useful during the Katrina rebuilding in New Orleans and elsewhere.

On the Net: www.twc.state.tx.us & www.dol.gov

1:41 P.M. - RALEIGH, NC (AP): Governor Michael Easley says other states have come to the aid of North Carolina after hurricanes have struck, and he says it's time to return the favor for victims of Hurricane Katrina.

Easley's comments came this afternoon on the first day that hundreds of evacuees were flown to their new and temporary homes in North Carolina.

Residents of New Orleans who were forced out of their homes were flown out of the beleaguered city and brought to both Raleigh and Charlotte.

In Raleigh, hurricane victims were brought to a former Nortel training center on the west side of town after reaching the city on Labor Day.

Easley says evacuees who were flown to Charlotte were housed at the Charlotte Coliseum.

1:40 P.M. - (AP): The mayor of New Orleans says he's seeing "significant" progress in his city, now about 60% under water.

That figure would be down from 80% during the darkest days of last week. Mayor Ray Nagin made the estimate fresh from an aerial tour of the flooded town.

With a major levee break finally plugged, engineers have been struggling today to pump out the water, still as high as seven feet in some places.

Nagin described the latest progress as "rays of light." But he and other authorities say they're bracing for the horrors the receding waters and toxic muck are certain to reveal.

Nagin has said the city's death toll could reach 10,000.

1:13 P.M. - BATON ROUGE: U.S. Attorney Jim Letten told reporters Tuesday that Wendell A. Bailey was arrested for attempting to destroy or endanger an aircraft early Tuesday morning. Law enforcement received a report via WWL radio that listeners had heard shots being fired in the Algiers area. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms officers in Algiers responded witnessed Bailey firing at a passing military helicopter and took him into custody. Bailey, a convicted felon, was found in possession of a firearm.

12:15 P.M. - WHITE HOUSE (AP): In the debate about how to describe those displaced by Hurricane Katrina, President Bush is joining those who don't like the word "refugees."

The president tells reporters, "The people we're talking about are not refugees, they are Americans." And he adds, "They need the help and love and compassion of our fellow citizens."

Bush spoke during a meeting with leaders of charity and volunteer groups who are helping Katrina's victims.

His words appear to put him on the same side as the Reverend Jesse Jackson, who has declared it's "racist" to call U.S. citizens refugees. Jackson and other black leaders say the word has a criminal connotation -- and prefer the more neutral term "evacuees."

12:10 P.M. - Meg Casper, State Dept. of Education: Parents should enroll their children in school districts where the family is seeking temporary shelter. We're getting requests from everywhere across the country about enrolling displaced kids.

When asked for a status report on school systems: Orleans and St. Bernard look like they will not be operating this year. We are working on a database to track students to make sure they are enrolled elsewhere.

12:04 P.M. - CAPITOL HILL (AP): Congress is promising to hold hearings as it conducts its own investigation into the federal response to Hurricane Katrina.

Senator Susan Collins says "government at all levels failed." The Republican from Maine says it's difficult to understand the ineffective response to a disaster that had been warned about for years.

Congress has formally returned today from a five-week summer break, with lawmakers signaling that hurricane relief efforts will be a top priority in the weeks ahead.

Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist says the response "needs to be first and foremost."

Congress already has approved ten and \$500 million as an initial downpayment for hurricane relief. But an aide to Democratic Leader Harry Reid says those efforts eventually could exceed \$150 billion.

12:02 P.M. - WWL-TV: Community Coffee pledges over five million cups of coffee to the relief effort.

11:53 A.M. - WWL-TV: A hotline has been established for rescue workers responding to Hurricane Katrina to call if they begin experiencing feelings of stress, anxiety, depression or fear in response to their work. The toll-free counseling hotline is 1-877-556-2476. Please call this number to speak with a licensed counseling representative.

11:45 A.M. - BATON ROUGE (AP): Victims of Hurricane Katrina scrambling for housing in their temporary new hometowns can access a new Web site designed to link renters directly with property owners with an apartment, house or room to rent.

The site, www.HurricaneHousing.net, has a search engine that allows users to choose the city, parish or county where they are seeking housing in a seven-state area that includes Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Texas, Arkansas and Georgia.

The site was developed by real estate agents, many of them swamped with phone calls from displaced residents who won't be able to return to their water-logged homes anytime soon.

Because many people don't immediately have Web access, officials with Louisiana Realtors noted that FEMA was attempting to set up Internet stations at shelters that are packed with evacuees.

11:42 A.M. - NEW YORK (AP): Traveling by boat and wading through foul-smelling water, Harry Connick Junior surveyed the damage by Hurricane Katrina to his father's New Orleans home.

It wasn't as bad as Connick had feared.

He returned to New Orleans Monday, a trip documented for NBC's "Today" show and aired today. He had traveled to the city last week.

His father, Harry Connick Senior, served as district attorney of New Orleans for 29 years before retiring in 2003. Last week, the 37-year-old jazz singer said all of his immediate family were safe.

Connick performed Friday night on "A Concert for Hurricane Relief," which aired on NBC

and other networks. He has agreed to be honorary chair of Habitat for Humanity's "Operation Home Delivery," a long-term rebuilding plan for the hurricane-damaged Gulf Coast.

11:39 A.M. - Blaine Kern, Mardi Gras World: Mardi Gras will be hurt this year, but it will come back bigger and better than ever. I'll be helping anybody get their parade on the streets.

11:38 A.M. - Kern: Not sure if people in smaller parade clubs will be able to pay their dues. Haven't talked to any of the captains of any parade krewes. The major krewes may hopefully roll.

11:37 A.M. - Kern: There'll be a Mardi Gras, if I have anything to say about it.

11:35 A.M. - WASHINGTON (AP): A new search-and-rescue effort is in the works for flooded areas of central New Orleans.

The commander of the Army's 82nd Airborne Division says paratroopers are planning to use inflatable Zodiac craft and other small boats in that effort.

Major General William Caldwell says the top priority will be to find and evacuate people who want to get out.

Caldwell says conditions in the city are improving. He says electricity is gradually returning.

He says he and his soldiers spend their days on the streets, and their nights sleeping on the ground at the airport. He says there are no toilet facilities and no showers, and there are only MRE's and water to eat and drink.

But Caldwell says they can "go for weeks like this." And he adds, "At least we'll have homes to go back to."

11:28 A.M. - (National Press Photographers Association): Chaos through a camera lens: photojournalists in New Orleans to cover the aftermath of Katrina. [Click here](#)

11:21 A.M. - (AP): Red Sox pitcher Curt Schilling to fly New Orleans family of nine to Boston, provide them with housing for a year. [Click here](#).

11:14 A.M. - WASHINGTON (AP): Paratroopers of the Army's 82nd Airborne Division plan to use small boats, including inflatable Zodiac craft, to launch a new search-and-rescue effort in flooded areas of central New Orleans, the division commander said Tuesday.

In a telephone interview from his operations center at New Orleans International Airport, Maj. Gen. William B. Caldwell IV said his soldiers' top priority is finding, recovering and evacuating people who want to get out of the flooded city.

Caldwell, who arrived in New Orleans on Saturday night to what he described as "an absolutely chaotic situation" at the international airport there, said conditions are improving, including a gradual return of electricity.

He said he and his soldiers spend their days on the streets of Orleans parish and their nights sleeping on the ground at the airport, with no toilet facilities, no showers and only military packaged meals and water for sustenance.

"We can go for weeks like this," he said. "At least we'll have homes to go back to."

Caldwell said that about 3,000 82nd Airborne paratroopers from Fort Bragg, N.C., are there now and another 2,000 were due to arrive Tuesday. They are in addition to about 1,400 soldiers of the 1st Cavalry Division and about 600 from the 13th Corps Support Command arriving from Fort Hood, Texas. All should be in place by Wednesday, he said.

The Pentagon has insisted for days that no more than 5,200 active-duty Army soldiers, plus 2,000 Marines, would be sent to help with Katrina relief, but Caldwell said he plans to have about 7,000 soldiers by Wednesday. That is in addition to about 2,000 Marines who are going to assist in damaged areas of Mississippi.

11:10 A.M. - SAN ANTONIO (AP): Saints trying to regain sense of normalcy. [Click](#)

[here](#)

11:00 A.M. - (AP): Even as Hurricane Katrina's floodwaters recede from New Orleans, frustration among area officials continues to spill over.

The president of Jefferson Parish says people who were too poor to evacuate are now on the brink of starvation.

Aaron Broussard tells CBS' "The Early Show" these residents had the spirit to endure the forces of Mother Nature, but now their biggest obstacle may be "human nature."

In his words, "Bureaucracy has murdered people in the greater New Orleans area." He's demanding a congressional probe into what happened there -- headed by the right person.

As he put it, "Take whatever idiot they have at the top of whatever agency and give me a better idiot. Give me a caring idiot. Give me a sensitive idiot. Just don't give me the same idiot."

Meantime, Broussard is calling for any kind of help. Even a week after Katrina hit, he says locals still "need everything."

10:58 A.M. - TORRANCE, CA (AP): A Colorado-based ambulance company says it's sending 30 ambulances staffed with medical personnel to Baton Rouge -- to help evacuate survivors of Hurricane Katrina.

American Medical Response of Greenwood Village (Colorado) has supplied 100 ambulances and crews from around the nation so far, at the request of the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

The latest group of ambulances will come from Torrance, California -- where AMR operates a regional office.

The company has a total fleet of about 4,000 ambulances, and employs more than 17,000 people.

10:35 A.M. LITTLE ROCK, AR (AP): The state of Arkansas is continuing to adapt to the influx of storm victims from areas affected by Hurricane Katrina.

Governor Mike Huckabee estimates that between 70,000 and 100,000 evacuees are in the state -- equal to about 3% of Arkansas' population.

The governor says he's been touched by the response of Arkansas residents -- with people volunteering and donating money and food and clothing. Now, Huckabee says the state has to help evacuees become a part of the daily rhythm of life in the state -- by finding them jobs and, in some cases, permanent housing.

10:30 A.M. - Mayor Ray Nagin: Toxic waste found in water samples taken from New Orleans.

10:29 A.M. - Nagin: When asked if local or federal government bares the blame for the lack of a speedy response: We all bare responsibility for what happened here. We shouldn't play the blame game. A lot of people suffered and died here, and we need to make sure that never happens again. It's bigger than any one person. This sort of tragedy required quick action, and the bureaucracy kept that from happening.

10:27 A.M. - WASHINGTON (AP): Buffeted by criticism over the federal response to Hurricane Katrina, President Bush said Tuesday he will oversee an investigation into what went wrong and why -- in part to be sure the country could withstand more storms or attack.

Bush also announced he is sending Vice President Dick Cheney to the Gulf Coast region on Thursday to help determine whether the government is doing all that it can.

"Bureaucracy is not going to stand in the way of getting the job done for the people," the president said after a meeting at the White House with his Cabinet on storm recovery efforts.

10:21 A.M. - GULFPORT, MS (AP): At least 100 looting suspects have been arrested

on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. There were at least 84 people being held Monday at the Harrison County Adult Detention Center on looting charges from throughout Harrison and Hancock counties. Most, if not all, have a \$10,000 cash bond, which requires the full amount of bail money upfront.

Looting arrests in Jackson County bring the coastal count to 100. If convicted, looters face up to 15 years in prison and a fine of \$10,000.

9:57 A.M. - [Oprah Winfrey's Katrina Aid page](#)

9:52 A.M. - [Conservative talk show host Rush Limbaugh to do Katrina benefit on Broadway](#)

9:42 A.M. - Jefferson Parish Sheriff's Office spokesman John Fortunato: As far as we know all of our deputies are okay - we have had some deserters though, I won't comment about how many.

9:39 A.M. - BILOXI, Miss. (AP) -- More than a week later, the Gulf waters off Biloxi, Mississippi, are perfectly tranquil -- but the evidence of what they did a week ago is all around. The city's Beach Boulevard divides the Gulf from the homes that face it. Only two of the four lanes are passable, since the other two are choked with debris. And police are only letting relief crews and some media move along the two open sand-filled lanes.

9:35 A.M. - Jefferson Parish Sheriff's Office spokesman John Fortunato: So far, the return of people to get things from their homes has gone very smoothly. The majority of people did just what we asked and did not stay overnight.

9:33 A.M. - ST. BERNARD PARISH SCHOOL INFORMATION: "Almost all of our schools have been underwater, and we will not, in all likelihood, be fully operational this school year, said St. Bernard Parish Superintendent Doris Voltier. "Therefore, if you can find employment, secure it. If not, file for unemployment benefits. Those of you who have direct deposit should have received your August 31 paycheck already and will receive an additional payroll check on September 15. If you do not have direct deposit, call the Louisiana State Department of Education at **1-877-453-2721**. Be prepared to give us your name, address and social security number, and we will forward your paycheck to you, Voltier said.

"At this time, we cannot answer questions concerning additional payroll, insurance benefits or credit union issues. However, we do hope to have answers for you within the next two weeks. We will rebuild our school system, Voltier stressed.

9:32 A.M. - PLAQUEMINES SCHOOL INFORMATION: "Plaquemines Parish has a total of nine schools and six of them are under water, said Plaquemines Parish Superintendent Jim Hoyle. "Three of our schools fared pretty well. They are Belle Chase Elementary, Middle and High Schools. We are going to try to make another payroll for all of our employees and to get our schools up and running again in one month. We will work with the schools we have and reclaim the others one by one. We will continue to give everyone updated information as our plans go forward but we will be back in the business of educating our children as soon as possible, Hoyle said.

9:28 A.M. - BILOXI, Miss. (AP) -- Among the few things along the Biloxi, Mississippi, waterfront that seemed to have escaped damage -- the famous Hard Rock guitar sign. But the future of workers at the new casino and hotel and other establishments is much more uncertain. Beach Boulevard is a mess, along with many of the casinos themselves. There's no timeline for when they may reopen. And that has left thousands of workers scrambling.

9:22 A.M. - WHITE HOUSE (AP) -- The White House is rebuffing calls to fire the federal disaster chief in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Press Secretary Scott McClellan says, "We're not going to engage in the blame game."

State and local officials in Louisiana have been furious over what they say is the slow federal response to the storm. Yesterday, the state's largest newspaper, The Times-Picayune, published an open letter to President Bush calling for the firing of Director Michael Brown of the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

But McClellan tells reporters the president will "remain focused on the response and recovery efforts."

8:52 A.M. - WASHINGTON (AP) -- The government says people displaced by Hurricane Katrina will get debit cards to help pay for necessary personal items. The

deputy director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency says workers are going from shelter to shelter to make sure evacuees get cards quickly. Patrick Rhode tells ABC's "Good Morning America" that the paperwork usually required to get the debit cards will be reduced or eliminated.

8:50 A.M. - Jefferson Parish Emergency Operations Center chief Dr. Walter Maestri: Plaquemines and St. Bernard will have a very hard time getting the water out because they don't have the expensive pumps that Orleans and Jefferson have.

8:48 A.M. - NORTH PLATTE, Neb. (AP) -- A six-year-old Nebraska girl is joining thousands of her grown-up counterparts in offering help to the victims of Hurricane Katrina. Brianna Taft of North Platte is selling her handmade bracelets to help in the relief effort. She has set up a table in front of SunMart in North Platte and hopes to sell 600 bracelets.

8:46 A.M. - WASHINGTON (AP) -- The Bush administration was warned by congressional investigators this summer that some first responders were concerned that their training and equipment was tilting too much toward combatting terrorism rather than natural disasters.

It's too early to tell whether the shift affected the slow federal response to Hurricane Katrina. But it led some emergency personnel to raise red flags

8:44 A.M. - Jefferson Parish Emergency Operations Center chief Dr. Walter Maestri: Can we build a levee system to prevent this from happening again? I don't know. To rebuild the system to protect us from this type of storm would be astronomical.

8:42 A.M. - Maestri: There will be time to assess blame. When this is over and emotions are under more control, we'll assess what happened. We're all angry, including me, because promises made were not promises kept. We were told we would be on our own for 48 hours and then the cavalry would arrive, but it didn't.

8:40 A.M. - Maestri: Our citizens feel a breach of trust. It's almost like infidelity in a relationship. A lot of our people feel cheated.

8:38 A.M. - [Brother Martin High to relocate temporarily to Catholic High in Baton Rouge](#)

8:10 A.M. - [Animal lovers search for dog ripped from young boy's arms](#)

8:04 A.M. - (AP) -- With a major levee break finally plugged, engineers struggled to pump out the flooded city Tuesday as authorities braced for the horrors the receding water would reveal. "It's going to be awful and it's going to wake the nation up again," the mayor said.

Mayor Ray Nagin said it would take three weeks to remove the water and another few weeks to clear the debris. It could also take up to eight weeks to get the electricity back on.

"I've gone from anger to despair to seeing us turn the corner," he said on NBC's "Today." Still, he warned that what awaits authorities below the toxic muck would be gruesome. A day earlier, he said the death toll in New Orleans could reach 10,000.

7:46 A.M. - AUSTIN (AP) -- While the airlift of Hurricane Katrina refugees out of Texas appeared to be on hold, plans to move some to cruise ships in Galveston have also been postponed. The delay was announced in a statement issued Tuesday by the Unified Command in charge of the shelter in and around the Houston Astrodome. No new relocation date was mentioned.

7:35 A.M. - Chanel LaGarde, Entergy spokesman: We have 385,000 customers back on and we have some downtown buildings back, along with two pumping stations. We're back in Algiers now, but it will be 2-3 weeks to get everyone back there.

7:33 A.M. - LaGarde: Return of power to everyone in New Orleans and St. Bernard will be "months not weeks."

7:15 A.M. - Dr. Brobson Lutz, former health director for the city of New Orleans: Fortunately the storm, in addition to moving out the people, also moved out the mosquitoes and the birds that can spread West Nile, but the mosquitoes and birds will return.

7:14 A.M. - Lutz: Mosquitoes don't bite on corpses. As horrible as the floating bodies are, they are not an infectious disease risk. I'm more concerned about the psychological risks of that.

7:12 A.M. - Lutz: We will have some major post-traumatic stress in our population. What you do to stop that is to let people know they have an adequate supply of food and water and adequate shelter.

7:10 A.M. - Lutz: Injuries will be a tremendous problem after this. If you've never used a chainsaw before, that could be a problem. There can also be some major skin and staff infections. Soap and water and baths can keep down the problems.

7:05 A.M. - Lutz - You do not need tetanus shots if you had your childhood immunizations. The tetanus immunization is so powerful that if you got your correct series of shots as a child, you are okay.

7:04 A.M. - Lutz: Cholera is not a problem as long as there is bottled water to drink. It was not a problem after the Tsunami. Also, no need for typhoid shots.

7:00 A.M. - AUSTIN, Texas (AP) -- About four thousand evacuees were to be moved by bus today and tomorrow from the Houston Astrodome to cruise ships on the Gulf Coast in Galveston, Texas, about an hour away.

Governor Rick Perry had told federal officials that more ships could eventually be stationed in Beaumont and Corpus Christi.

Meanwhile, federal officials have taken over the Texas airlift of Hurricane Katrina refugees to other states, but no planes left yesterday.

6:44 A.M. - [World Forum: Did Nagin pass on chance to use buses to get people out.](#)

6:32 A.M. - [The Times-Picayune's open letter to President Bush](#)

6:10 A.M. - City Councilwoman Jackie Clarkson: Don't give up on New Orleans. It will be rebuilt. The French Quarter sat there untouched as a symbol. We're a major part of the American economy. We're as important as New York, Chicago and San Francisco.

6:09 A.M. - Clarkson: The film industry is still coming, and they're coming in a major way. My daughter Patricia (award-winning actress Patricia Clarkson) asked, "how many from Hollywood can I bring to help?"

6:08 A.M. - Clarkson: To my friends in Algiers, you have no flooding, you have drinking water, and very little damage, but you should not come back because there is no power.

6:07 a.m. - HOUSTON (AP) -- Former first lady Barbara Bush is getting attention for some of the comments she made about New Orleans evacuees who are now in Houston. In an interview with the American Public Media program "Marketplace," she said the relocation is "working very well" for some of those forced out of New Orleans. She noted that many of the people at the Astrodome were "underprivileged anyway."

6:05 A.M. - NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) -- The arena that already hosts the NHL's Nashville Predators is being offered up as a temporary home for 12 home games for the NBA's New Orleans Hornets this season. Hugh Lombardi, general manager of the Gaylord Entertainment Center, said he has contacted the NBA to offer the arena as a potential site for some home games. The New Orleans Arena is located next to the Louisiana Superdome, and the NBA has informed teams the Hornets may relocate.

6:01 A.M. - (AP) -- Authorities at New Orleans makeshift jail say they expect the number of inmates to grow. Only about 30 prisoners are being housed at the converted bus and train station right now, but police from neighboring Jefferson Parish may deliver inmates they had held the past few days. Nearly eight thousand prisoners were transported out of New Orleans jails last week and moved to state prisons and jails in neighboring towns.

5:55 A.M. - NEW YORK (AP) -- A book about a deadly 1927 flood along the Mississippi River has become an online best-seller since Hurricane Katrina devastated the Gulf Coast. It's called "Rising Tide: The Great Mississippi Flood of 1927 and How it Changed America." It has moved to Number Eleven on Amazon-dot-com's best-seller list.

4:16 A.M. - BEVERLY HILLS, Calif. (AP) -- The Jerry Lewis Labor Day Telethon has raised nearly 55 (m) million dollars for the Muscular Dystrophy Association and more than \$1 million for victims of Hurricane Katrina.

The telethon's effort to fight muscular dystrophy was \$4.5 million less than last year, but lower figures were expected because of the outpouring of donations for the hurricane victims.

3:41 A.M. - COLUMBUS, Ga. (AP) -- Habitat for Humanity leaders say they plan to build thousands of homes along the Gulf Coast in what could be the Georgia-based organization's largest construction project ever.

Habitat plans to launch "Operation Home Delivery" later this month in Jackson, Mississippi.

It will assemble housing frames there and put them on trucks bound for Alabama, Louisiana and Mississippi. The nonprofit group has issued an emergency appeal for donations and volunteers.

2:22 A.M. - (AP) A week after Hurricane Katrina swept through, engineers plugged the levee break that had swamped much of the city and floodwaters began to recede, but along with the good news came the mayor's direst prediction yet: as many as 10,000 dead. Crews had put up metal sheets and dropped 3,000-pound sandbags from helicopters onto the 17th Street canal leading to Lake Pontchartrain to plug the 200-foot-wide gap, and water was being pumped from the canal back into the lake.

1:15 A.M. - HOUSTON (AP) -- For those who lived the horror of the Superdome in New Orleans last week, Houston's Astrodome feels like the Taj Mahal.

Among its relative luxuries are lukewarm showers, 85 toilets that actually flush: hot grits, pancakes in the morning, Cajun dinners served on plastic foam trays and an operating air conditioner.

The refugees are also getting complimentary socks, Twinkies, baby formula, flip-flops, toiletries, Bermudas and paperback books.

Most important, there are 500 uniformed, Texas lawmen strolling the concourses, ramps and stands to make sure people behave.

1:01 A.M. - BENTONVILLE, Ark. (AP) -- Wal-Mart says most of its stores affected by Hurricane Katrina have reopened, but 18 are still closed.

Fifteen of the stores are in Louisiana, and the other three are in Mississippi.

Wal-Mart says at one point, 126 of its facilities were shuttered. Nine have reported major damage, 41 moderate damage, and 39 minor damage or merchandise lost.

Wal-Mart says it's been in touch with over 65 percent of its 34-thousand workers affected by the storm. That includes some found in evacuee shelters.

The company says it's "committed to providing work for displaced associates who want to work in open stores."

12:37 A.M. - [Battle for gas in Mississippi a serious problem.](#)

TUESDAY 12:03 A.M. - [Officer who dealt in bad news daily succumbs to Katrina disaster.](#)

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-  [Rushing home owners arrested in deaths of 34 patients](#)
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News, Media Advisories & Disaster Updates

First Responders Urged Not To Respond To Hurricane Impact Areas Unless Dispatched By State, Local Authorities

Release Date: August 29, 2005

Release Number: HQ-05-174

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WASHINGTON D.C. -- Michael D. Brown, Under Secretary of Homeland Security for Emergency Preparedness and Response and head of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), today urged all fire and emergency services departments not to respond to counties and states affected by Hurricane Katrina without being requested and lawfully dispatched by state and local authorities under mutual aid agreements and the Emergency Management Assistance Compact.

"The response to Hurricane Katrina must be well coordinated between federal, state and local officials to most effectively protect life and property," Brown said. "We appreciate the willingness and generosity of our Nation's first responders to deploy during disasters. But such efforts must be coordinated so that fire-rescue efforts are the most effective possible."

The U.S. Fire Administration, part of FEMA, asks that fire and emergency services organizations remain in contact with their local and state emergency management agency officials for updates on requirements in the affected areas.

"It is critical that fire and emergency departments across the country remain in their jurisdictions until such time as the affected states request assistance," said U.S. Fire Administrator R. David Paulison. "State and local mutual aid agreements are in place as is the Emergency Management Assistance Compact and those mechanisms will be used to request and task resources needed in the affected areas."

Paulison said the National Incident Management System is being used during the response to Hurricane Katrina and that self-dispatching volunteer assistance could significantly complicate the response and recovery effort.

FEMA prepares the nation for all hazards and manages federal response and recovery efforts following any national incident. FEMA also initiates mitigation activities, trains first responders, works with state and local emergency managers, and manages the National Flood Insurance Program and the U.S. Fire Administration. FEMA became part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security on March 1, 2003.

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