

# Topline Messages

---

**Release Date: Sep 14, 2022**

- As work continues at the OB Curtis Water Treatment Plant, the federal government remains in close coordination with Mississippi Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) and the City of Jackson to help stabilize the water system and develop a plan for long term solutions.
- The response to the water emergency in Mississippi is being supported by FEMA, EPA and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.
- This is a whole community effort, including local, state, federal, private sector, faith-based and voluntary organizations.
  - 10 million bottles of water have been distributed in Jackson and Hinds County through the joint efforts of the City of Jackson, MEMA And the Mississippi National Guard.
  - Mississippi VOAD and Human Services is managing alternative distribution efforts for people who cannot access one of the joint distribution sites. To date they have supported 2,900 household members with more than 75 pallets of water. Recipients are identified through participating churches, affiliated ministries, established partnerships, and through the MEMA Assistance Hotline.
  - Donations management is being handled locally by volunteer and faith-based organizations. To donate to support the Jackson Water Crisis, go to [msema.org](https://msema.org). and click on the Jackson Water Crisis 2022 tab for a list of donation recipients.
  - The Mississippi Business Emergency Operations Center is coordinating bottled water donations from private business and churches.
  - The DHS Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships has reached out and met with numerous faith leaders and organizations to identify any additional needs.

## Update on OB Curtis Water Treatment Plant

- MEMA reports that, overall, water production continues to improve. However, fluctuations are expected as consumption varies and components temporarily come on and off-line for repairs.



**FEMA**

Page 1 of 4

- Water has been restored to all end users. Any current outages are part of normal operating conditions.
- The Boil Water Notice remains in effect, but the city, state, and federal partners are working diligently toward lifting the notice.
- Full sampling of the distribution system began yesterday. Samples are being taken from 120 predetermined locations. All 120 locations will be sampled twice and if all the sample results are negative, the Boil Water Notice can be lifted.
- Current efforts center on maintaining/increasing pressure and quantity/quality of water in the distribution system. Repair of key components of the chemical treatment system continues.

## **FEMA support**

- FEMA senior staff are coordinating closely with MEMA leadership at the state EOC.
- FEMA Public Assistance staff are working with MEMA to support the grant reimbursement process. The state held an Applicant Briefing last week. This is the first step in the Public Assistance process. A video of the briefing is being shared with other potential applicants who did not attend.
- FEMA planning specialists are supporting joint local/state/federal efforts at the OB Curtis Water Treatment Plant.
- FEMA and MEMA leadership attend a weekly meeting with the mayor and his team to provide updates on federal support, answer questions and identify any issues or concerns.
- A FEMA Intergovernmental Affairs liaison is embedded with the mayor's office to ensure close coordination and communication with the mayor's team.
- FEMA created a fact sheet on the Public Assistance process, geared toward Houses of Worship, to ensure equitable access to program information and the state's application process. The state is also providing this information to its own list of faith-based organizations and other nonprofits.

## **FEMA Public Assistance**

- Houses of worship and religious nonprofit organizations that provide critical or essential social services and were affected by or supporting response for the Jackson Water Crisis in Hinds County may be eligible for FEMA assistance for emergency protective measures.



- President Biden's emergency declaration authorizes reimbursement for emergency protective measures under FEMA's [Public Assistance](#) program, including Direct Federal Assistance, for Hinds County at 75% federal funding for 90 days.
- All local governments and any eligible private nonprofits, including houses of worship, within Hinds County are eligible to apply for assistance.
- To begin the process, interested applicants should view the Applicant Briefing video posted online at [Public Assistance - MEMA \(msema.org\)](#). During the briefing, a MEMA representative provides education on the program, deadlines, eligibility factors, grant administration, and what else to expect throughout the Public Assistance Process.
- The Public Assistance program is administered by MEMA. FEMA reimburses 75% of eligible costs while the state and applicants cover the remaining 25%. The deadline to submit a Request for Public Assistance is Sept. 29.
- Federal funding under the Public Assistance program is available to support:
  - Temporary measures to reestablish water pressure and to sustain pressure while assessing more permanent repairs.
  - The cost of contracted water deliveries.
  - Additional staffing measures to help keep the water treatment plant running during this temporary timeframe.
- In addition to assistance provided under the Emergency Declaration, FEMA is identifying other available federal resources, beyond what FEMA programs can provide, to help the City of Jackson and the state address longer-term solutions to the city's water system.

## **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)**

- USACE received a mission assignment from FEMA Sept. 1 and the Vicksburg District immediately began work on assessments at the O.B. Curtis Water Treatment Plant in Jackson.
- Assessments of the pumping system, electrical system and plant processes have been completed. The assessment team is assisting the city of Jackson's public works department in developing a plan for winterization and long-term resiliency in the water and wastewater systems.
- For long-term resiliency, USACE recently received \$5 million in FY22 Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding for the City of Jackson Water System Rehabilitation project (water and wastewater rehabilitation), with a federal cost share of 75%. USACE will work with the city on priorities.



**FEMA**

## EPA

- EPA is supporting the emergency assessment of the city's water treatment facilities and has expedited delivery of critical equipment to help repair the O.B. Curtis Water Treatment Plant.
- EPA personnel are working with state and local authorities to establish process controls, address corrosion control, remove sediment from treatment process, develop a monitoring plan and conduct preliminary water quality checks on the system.
- EPA is providing technical support to the city and the state with the operator staffing plan through mutual aid until a contract operator is identified.

## Where Can Individuals Receive Bottled Water?

- Due to improved water pressure and a decrease in demand for non-potable water, Metrocenter Mall is the ONLY site providing non-potable water, water used for flushing toilets. All four sites continue distributing drinking bottled water.
- Each site is open for water pick-up daily from 9:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. until further notice.
  - State Fairgrounds, 1207 Mississippi St., Jackson, MS
  - Metrocenter Mall, 3645 Highway 80, Jackson, MS (Non-potable)
  - Smith Wills Stadium, 1200 Lakeland Dr., Jackson, MS
  - Davis Road Park, 2300 Davis Rd., Terry, MS 39170
- The State Water Distribution Sites are open to all those impacted by the Jackson water crisis. No one will ask for an I.D. If someone asks for an ID at one of the sites MEMA is supporting, report it to the MEMA call center at 1-833-591-6362.
- If you do not have access to one of the pick-up sites and need water delivered, contact MEMA's Resource Information Call Center at **1-833-591-6362**. Lines are open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. every day.
- For City of Jackson water precautions, visit [HealthyMS.com/JacksonWater](https://HealthyMS.com/JacksonWater).
- For more information, visit [MSEMA.org/Jackson-water-crisis-2022](https://MSEMA.org/Jackson-water-crisis-2022).



FEMA