



STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
HALEY BARBOUR, GOVERNOR
MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
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Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ)
Flood Debris Management Guidance for Local Governments
(May 20, 2011)

The Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) has developed this information in response to the severe flooding of May 2011 along the Mississippi River in the State of Mississippi. Due to the significant flood damage to buildings and property, affected local governments will need to develop a plan for how debris and wastes will be collected and managed in the flood impacted areas. As a part of this debris management plan, local governments in the flood impact areas may request emergency approval from MDEQ for a temporary emergency debris management site. The Mississippi Nonhazardous Solid Waste Management Regulations allow the MDEQ to issue such an emergency approval for a temporary debris management site or facility for immediate operation, subject to stipulated operating conditions. MDEQ will work with local governments on a case by case basis to establish a debris management plan and debris sites based on the local needs of each community.

Where debris will be collected directly from homes along the right of way, local governments may be able to haul this debris directly to a local permitted landfill or class I rubbish site to avoid double handling of the material. In instances where the debris needs segregation, where landfills or rubbish sites are not in close proximity to the flood areas, or where residents will be directed to haul to a local debris drop off site, the MDEQ may authorize temporary staging, segregation or transfer sites for building and structural debris to facilitate easier transport to permitted disposal facilities. Open burning of building or structural debris will not be allowed. This document provides guidance to affected local governments (including cities, counties and other local and state government organizations) on selecting temporary flood debris management sites for the purpose of temporary storage of building and structural debris and other related solid wastes and in some instances sites for management of vegetative debris. This document also provides information on how to request authorization for such emergency debris sites from the MDEQ.

Based on the local needs, MDEQ may also consider proposals for flood debris management sites that are not addressed by this policy where adequate local disposal capacity and other suitable disposal options do not exist. Local governments interested in pursuing alternative debris management and disposal options should contact the MDEQ Solid Waste Management Programs for specific guidance at 601-961-5171. Please note that this guidance information is subject to change and may be updated as the clean-up and debris removal progresses.

Selecting Temporary Flood Debris Staging Sites

1. In evaluating potential flood debris staging sites proposed by the local government for the temporary storage of structural/building debris and other associated debris, the following location restrictions apply. Unless otherwise approved by MDEQ, the local government should consider these restrictions when selecting a site:
 - a) Sites which stage or store flood debris shall maintain at least a 500 foot setback distance between the debris storage or processing areas and any occupied dwelling.
 - b) All debris management sites should have a 250 foot setback distance between the debris storage and/or processing areas and the nearest property line.
 - c) All debris management sites should have a 250 foot setback distance between the debris storage and/or processing areas and the nearest state water body (e.g. lakes, rivers, creeks, streams, etc.).
 - d) Debris management sites should not be located in wetlands or in low lying or flood prone areas.
 - e) Debris management sites should not be located in close proximity to public drinking water supply wells or individual private drinking water wells.
 - f) Sites with any pre-existing environmental problems, illegal dumping problems, or other similar conditions should be avoided.

Sites that do not meet these requirements should not be considered for management of flood debris.

2. Sites should be large enough in area to comply with the location restrictions outlined in this guidance document and to accommodate the estimated quantity of structural or vegetative debris. Incoming debris and waste materials should be limited to a reasonable and manageable height. Local governments are requested to consider placement of appropriately sized dumpsters or roll-off containers at the staging sites to facilitate storage and transport. Open burning of debris at the staging sites is expressly prohibited.
3. If a local government chooses to consider the use of 16th Section property for a temporary emergency debris management site, such action must be properly coordinated with the appropriate local school district officials and the Mississippi Secretary of State's Office, prior to requesting authorization for the site from MDEQ. Documentation of such coordination must be provided with the local government's request.
4. MDEQ encourages that, where possible, temporary sites be owned or controlled by the affected city, county or state government entity. In the event that the property selected is owned or controlled by a private interest, the responsibility for obtaining the proper access to the site will be with the local/state government or other authorized agent of the local/state government entity. Responsibility for the operation and closure of the site shall fall jointly with the local government, the private property owner or other authorized agent of the local government subject to the terms of site operating agreements. Any sites requested for authorization which are owned or controlled by a private interest must have the written approval of the local government in the form of a city or county letter, and must have the written approval of the property owner.

Requesting Authorization for a Temporary Flood Debris Staging Site

1. Local governments impacted by severe flooding and faced with the need to manage large quantities of building debris or vegetative debris should submit a written request to MDEQ for authorization to operate a temporary emergency debris management site. The request should:
 - Provide written confirmation that the affected local government has determined that the conditions from the flood require the use of a temporary emergency management site(s) for the flood debris. This information would include estimates of the amount and types of flood debris in the jurisdiction, the lack of available permitted landfills or other solid waste disposal facilities in the impacted areas and the type of facility needed.
 - Describe the type of operations that will be conducted at the site such as temporary debris staging and storage, chipping of vegetative debris and other management of the types of wastes that will be brought to the site for storage. Such wastes could include:
 - structural debris such as brick, wood, carpeting, flooring, siding, metal sheeting, roofing materials, furniture, and other similar materials
 - vegetative debris such as trees, limbs, stumps and other vegetation;
 - household garbage including food items, personal grooming products, electronics, cosmetics, medication and other similar items.
 - bulky household appliances such as refrigerators, air conditioning units, washers, dryers, hot water heaters, and other similar items.
 - household hazardous wastes or chemicals such as propane tanks, gasoline and used oil, household chemicals, paints, stains and thinners, and other similar items.
 - Include a site map, physical address and directions which identify the temporary site location. Where possible, the MDEQ requests that GPS coordinates be provided for the site;
 - Include a description of the site's ability to comply with the location restrictions identified in this guidance;
 - Include an estimate of the time necessary to start and complete all emergency operations, including final clean up and closure of the site;
 - Include a written statement from the site property owner(s) acknowledging concurrence with the use of the property as an emergency debris management site;
 - Include a description of the manner in which the site will be operated and the name and contact information for any debris contractors that may be operating the site on behalf of the local government;
 - Include a description of the plans for final disposal or for beneficial use of all debris, garbage, vegetation, and any other solid wastes brought to the site; and
 - Include the name of a contact person and contact information (phone numbers, mailing addresses, etc.) of a person responsible for the proper operation of the site.
2. A request for emergency authorization should be transmitted by the affected local government to the MDEQ Solid Waste Management Programs by fax at 601-961-5785 or by mail or delivery to one of the following addresses:

By U.S. Mail:
MS Dept. of Environmental Quality
Solid Waste Management Programs
P.O. Box 2261
Jackson, MS 39225

By Courier or Delivery Service:
MS Dept of Environmental Quality
Solid Waste Management Programs
515 East Amite Street
Jackson, MS 39201

By Email:
Trent_Jones@deq.state.ms.us
Mark_Williams@deq.state.ms.us
Billy_Warden@deq.state.ms.us

3. Upon receipt of the request, MDEQ may conduct an inspection of the site to ensure that the surrounding areas will not be adversely impacted by the proposed operations.
4. If the request for authorization is approved, the MDEQ will issue a letter of temporary authorization to the local government or local government agent responsible for the emergency debris site. This letter of temporary authorization will outline the operating requirements, time limitations, closure requirements and any other guidelines that may apply. The MDEQ reserves the right to inspect the temporary site at all reasonable times. Furthermore, should the responsible parties, including local governments, landowners and/or contractors fail to adhere to the restrictions outlined in the MDEQ's letter of authorization or other pertinent laws, regulations or ordinances, additional operating conditions may be required, or operations may be terminated by the MDEQ.
5. It is the responsibility of the operator of the staging sites to remove and properly dispose of all collected building and structural debris at a permitted landfill or class I rubbish site. Household garbage and other similar wastes should be disposed at a municipal solid waste landfill. Household hazardous chemicals or other similar wastes must be disposed at an appropriate disposal site as directed by MDEQ. If the operator has questions regarding the acceptability of any debris or waste material, contact the MDEQ Solid Waste Management Programs at 601-961-5171 or the MDEQ field staff in your area for assistance.