

State lakes, parks back open to public

Press Release
Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (MDWFP) in response to Governor Tate Reeves' Executive Order 1473 re-opened state lakes and state park lakes to fishing and boating on Monday, April 20.

Bank fishing is allowed with social distancing requirements (maintaining a minimum of 6 feet distance between individuals). Fishing piers remain closed. A state fishing license is required to fish any public body of water in Mississippi. You can purchase a state fishing license and renew your boat registration online at www.ms.gov/mdwfp/licensing/login.

Social distancing guidelines set forth by the CDC and the Mississippi Department of Health (MDH) re-

garding COVID-19 must be adhered. Information regarding COVID-19 can be found on the MDH website: msdh.ms.gov/msdhsite/_static/14,0,420.html

For more details regarding Executive Order 1473, visit this website: <https://www.sos.ms.gov/content/executiveorders/ExecutiveOrders/1473.pdf>

Reporting a Hunting Violation
If you have a hunting violation or an emergency that you need to report please call 1-800-BE-SMART.

We apologize for any inconvenience during this time and we thank you for your cooperation.

Stay up to date by visiting our website at www.mdwfp.com.



God vs. Death

Death is the bully on the block of life. “Your time is coming,” he taunts. Oh, we try to prove him wrong. We jog. We diet. But we know

Auditor warns, informs Mississippians where to report different types of schemes

Press Release
Fraud schemes become more common, according to State Auditor Shad White, during emergencies. To help combat that fraud, the Office of the State Auditor released information on the best authorities to contact if Mississippians see a fraud scheme, along with information on

www.facebook.com/mdwfp on Facebook at www.facebook.com/mdwfp or on Twitter at www.twitter.com/MDWFPonline.

how to protect themselves from the fraud.

“As a Certified Fraud Examiner, I’m alarmed by the number of schemes we’re seeing pop up around Mississippi and on social media,” said White. “Everyone needs to stay vigilant and use common sense in times like these. Please report each of these schemes as you see them so the proper authority is alerted and can begin work.”

The following are examples of schemes authorities are seeing right now:

- Fraudsters may promise a stimulus check if you provide your bank account information. You should contact the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) for information about stimulus funds. Stimulus schemes can be reported to the Department of Justice at disaster@leo.gov or by calling the National Center for Disaster Fraud at (866)-720-5721.
- Fraud involving counterfeit or fake testing kits, COVID-19 cures, “immunity” pills, and fake protective equipment can also be reported to disaster@leo.gov or by calling the National Center for Disaster Fraud at (866)-720-5721.
- Be skeptical of people pressuring you to make a quick purchase of stock in a company based on how the company is fighting coronavirus. This is often referred to as a “pump-and-dump” scheme. Fraud like this should be reported to the United States Securities and Exchange Commission

(SEC) at www.sec.gov/tcr. The SEC has also published resources for investing during the pandemic on its website.

- “Phishing” is a fraud scheme where hackers try to convince you to open an email and click on a link. Doing so may give the hackers access to your personal information. Look for emails with misspelled sender addresses or those asking for personal information. Identity theft and phishing schemes can be reported to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) on their COVID-19 webpage.
- Price gouging and hoarding falls under the authority of the Attorney General in Mississippi and should be reported to their office by emailing webpage@ago.ms.gov or by calling (601)-359-3680.
- In charity fraud, scammers ask for donations to phony groups they say are raising money for COVID-19 relief. Be skeptical of charities demanding payment in cash only. Independently verify any charity or nonprofit asking for donations by Googling the charity. Report charity fraud to disaster@leo.gov or by calling the National Center for Disaster Fraud at (866)-720-5721.

- Be suspicious of unexpected phone calls from those you do not recognize. Illegal telemarketers can be reported to the Mississippi Public Service Commission by calling (601)-961-5434. Phone call scams can also be reported to the FTC on their website.

- Vendor fraud – where a company uses public corruption or intentionally creates fake bills and invoices to steal public money – in Mississippi cities, counties and state agencies can be reported to the Mississippi Office of the State Auditor online at www.osa.ms.gov or by calling 1-(800)-321-1275. Vendor fraud involving federal funds can also be reported to the U.S. Government Accountability Office at fraud@gao.gov or 1-(800)-424-5454.
- Theft of government property while employees are working from home can be reported to the Office of the State Auditor or your local police.

“What’s most alarming about many of these schemes is that our elderly often seem to be the targets of the fraudsters,” said White. “Please tell your older loved ones to be on the lookout and to be suspicious of any pandemic-related sales pitches directed to the elderly.”

The Office of the State Auditor and Auditor White will continue to publish information about fraud schemes on the Auditor’s website and via social media in coming weeks.

Support available for area producers through USDA

Press Release
Administrator Richard Fordyce designated one (1) county in the State of Mississippi as the primary natural disaster area. Producers in Attala county who suffered physical damage and losses caused flash flooding that occurred February 13, 2020 through February 20, 2020, may be eligible for U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) emergency loans.

This natural disaster designation allows FSA to extend much-needed emergency credit to producers recovering from natural disasters. Emergency loans can be used to meet various recovery needs including the replacement of essential items such as equipment or livestock, reorganization of a farming operation or the refinance of certain debts.

Producers in the contiguous Mississippi counties of Carroll, Choctaw, Holmes, Leake, Madison, Montgomery, Neshoba, Winston, and Yazoo are also eligible to apply for emergency loans.

The deadline to apply for these emergency loans is December 9, 2020.

FSA will review the loans based on the extent of losses, security available and repayment ability.

FSA has a variety of additional programs to help farmers recover from the impacts of this disaster. FSA programs that do not require a disaster declaration include: Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program;

Emergency Conservation Program; Livestock Forage Disaster Program; Livestock Indemnity Program; Operating and Farm Ownership Loans; and the Tree Assistance Program.

Farmers may contact their local USDA service center for further information on eligibility requirements and application procedures for these and other programs. Additional information is also available online at <https://www.farmers.gov/recover>.

that we will only, at best, postpone it. That is why you should never face him alone. That is why you need a big brother.

Take heart from these words, “Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death” (Hebrews 2:14-16).

Yes, the Christian can face the bully nose to nose and claim the promise that echoed in the empty tomb. My death is not final!

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Miss. senator active in promoting Miss. Ag & Livestock interests as Coronavirus Food Assistance Program developed

Press Release
U.S. Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith (R-Miss.) welcomed news of a two-pronged coronavirus relief plan for U.S. agriculture, including provisions that should benefit Mississippi livestock and agricultural producers hurt by price disruptions and market loss with the onset of the COVID-19 national emergency, on Friday, April 17.

Hyde-Smith praised President Donald Trump and Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue as they unveiled the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program on Friday evening.

The program entails the distribution of \$19 billion from the CARES Act. Approximately \$16 billion is to be provided in direct support to producers, while an additional \$3 billion in commodities will be purchased

to support food banks, non-profits and faith-based organizations.

“Agriculture and livestock producers in Mississippi and across the country share in the extraordinary hard times facing our nation today. Coronavirus Food Assistance Program resources can help support their operations and the products they produce to feed and clothe Americans,” said Hyde-Smith, who serves on Senate Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee and Senate Agriculture Committee.

“President Trump and Secretary Perdue are due appreciation for standing by our farmers and ranchers, who have weathered some very tough situations in recent times. I look forward to continuing to work with them as this program is implemented,” she said.

Under the first component of the program, beef, pork, dairy, produce, row crop producers, and others harmed by market disruptions may apply for direct payments funded through the USDA Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) and \$9.5 billion in CARES Act funding. In all, \$16 billion is available for the direct payments.

The second component involves the USDA using \$3 billion to purchase excess inventories of meat, dairy, fresh produce, and other products for use by regional foodbanks and other non-profit organizations.

In the weeks since President Trump signed the CARES Act, Hyde-Smith has engaged with the administration in promoting the interests of Mississippi and the nation’s agriculture and rural interests.



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