

# Residents Capture Winter Storm Fern's Impact Across Yalobusha County

YALOBUSHA COUNTY — What began as a simple request for help documenting Winter Storm Fern turned into a countywide effort that preserved images of dozens of damaged roadways for the historical record.

Yalobusha County Board of Supervisors Board President Cayce Washington asked residents to submit photos and videos showing storm-related damage to county roads.

“Like any storm of this magnitude, we picked up the equipment and went straight to work,” Washington said at the time. “That’s why we’re asking the public to help us document what happened.”

County road crews were focused on clearing debris and reopening blocked routes as quickly as possible.

That left little opportunity to photograph conditions before cleanup began.

The public responded. More than 75 individuals posted photographs of blocked county roads and debris on the original Facebook posts made by the North Mississippi Herald and the Coffeeville Courier. Another 20-plus people submitted landscape photographs showing the broader impact of the storm. In addition, 18 residents posted videos documenting road damage across the county.

Washington had announced that a private donor pledged prize money to encourage participation:

- \$50 each to the top five contributors who submitted the largest number of photos from confirmed, unique locations

- \$100 each to the top three video or drone submissions documenting damage across the most county roads

Multiple images of the same damage counted as one location. To qualify as unique, photos had to show different locations on a single road or damage across multiple county roads.

The five winners for most unique photo submissions are:

- Leighann Richardson
- Angel Lundeby
- Pam Crocker
- Jesi Marsh
- Alexie Hartman

Each submitted four or more unique images documenting storm damage.

The three winners for video submissions are:

- Miranda Phillips
- Keisha Mack



- Sarah Stewart

Washington said the submissions will help the county preserve a clear record of Winter Storm Fern’s impact for future reference.

Residents who were selected as winners may claim their prize money at the North Mississippi Herald office.

### YALOBUSHA COUNTY DEBRIS REMOVAL STATEMENT

Yalobusha County has adopted regulations governing the removal of disaster-generated debris. In coordination with our debris management contractor, we have implemented an efficient and systematic collection process, so residents understand what to expect and how to ensure successful removal of eligible debris.

Contractors operate seven (7) days per week, twelve (12) hours per day, and are collecting only storm-generated debris.

TFR Enterprises, Inc. has divided the County into multiple debris collection zones. All zones are being worked simultaneously, with priority given to the most heavily impacted areas to address immediate safety concerns. Within each zone, crews will complete debris removal from an entire subdivision, street, or block before progressing to the next area.

Residents are asked to place eligible storm-generated debris at the edge of the county or state maintained right of way. Your cooperation and patience during this recovery effort are greatly appreciated.

Work will begin on February 5, 2026 and will be performed the next 60 days.

As you prepare to place your debris curbside for collection, please adhere to the following guidelines:

- 1) Do not place debris on top of utilities, for example: cable, phone, electrical or storm drain boxes.
- 2) Please do not place debris in front of or around your mailbox.
- 2) Please do not place debris in front of or around your driveway, as emergency vehicles may need to enter the area.
- 4) Please drive with extreme caution in areas with large debris piles.
- 5) Please aid contractors by sweeping excess and loose debris from the street in front of your house for collection.
- 6) Please keep vegetative debris separate from damaged fence post and wire and mailboxes.
- 7) Report damages that occur to your personal property to the TFR hotline, (512) 260-3322.

We are a community, and we shall recover as a community. We appreciate your patience, cooperation, and assistance as we undertake this monumental cleanup effort.

**Yalobusha County Board of Supervisors**



### NOTICE OF WATER RATE INCREASE

Coffeeville Residents:

Due to the increasing cost of maintaining our water infrastructure, a change in water rates for the Town of Coffeeville will take effect on March 1, 2026. This will be reflected in your April bill.

The Board of Alderpersons has delayed taking this action for quite some time. Unlike many municipalities which increase water rates annually, the Town of Coffeeville has not raised rates for water and wastewater in five years.

Unfortunately, the cost to maintain and replace old pipes and pumps, as well as maintaining the treatment pond, have made this a necessary step our town must take to protect our water supply for residents.

In short, if you use less than 1,000 gallons of water each billing cycle, you will see an increase of \$3.50 for water each month. Those customers who use additional water beyond the first 1,000 gallons will now pay \$6.75 per 1,000 gallons (an increase of \$3.50).

As for wastewater, there will be a \$19.50 per month initial sewer charge and a \$6.75 charge per 1,000 gallons of water treated in excess of 1,000 gallons. Both of these amounts reflect an increase of \$3.50.

Any sewer customer outside the town limits of Coffeeville will pay \$20.50 per month for the initial sewer charge and a \$7.50 charge per thousand gallons of water treated in excess of 1,000 gallons. These amounts also reflect an increase of \$3.50.

We look forward to continuing to provide the citizens of Coffeeville with a safe, reliable source of water.

Sincerely,  
Mayor and Board of Alderpersons  
Coffeeville, Mississippi

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# Newspapers For Students

## BankFirst

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BankFirst, formerly Mechanics Bank, has been serving Yalobusha County since 1892, when it got its start in Water Valley. BankFirst is proud to be a part in the NFS program, realizing the importance of young people becoming aware of their community news and activities. Our young people are the very future of our community and need to be a strong part of the foundation of the community.

The NEWSPAPER IN EDUCATION program provides to the students as a supplemental reading material. Newspapers remain one of the most multifaceted and effected educational resources available for students. Each week during the school year over 300 newspapers are mailed to the students in the 1st grade through the 12th grades at the Coffeeville Schools. News and information are like food for the brain. Students tell us that this program seriously promotes reading skills, plus helps establish a sense of civic identity-making our young people aware of local events right here in Coffeeville and Yalobusha County. It helps to install a sense of community and place in youth, shaping them as future citizens. Newspapers not only bring academics to life, they also depend student learning by grounding it in real-life experiences.

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