

# Storm . . .

(Cont'd. from front page)

District 4 Supervisor Cayce Washington said the pace of spending forced him to scale back operations late last month.

"So late last Monday (Feb. 23), we were running up a pretty healthy bill," Washington said. "They were doing exactly what we asked them to do. But we've run up a pretty healthy cut bill to date."

Washington said he became concerned the county could reach \$6 million or \$7 million before even completing half the work.

"My concern with guys, more than anything, was I was seeing we were burning through a lot of cash," Washington said. "And I was concerned we were going to get 30, 40 percent complete, and we were going to have expended six or seven million dollars and still had a portion of the county that we hadn't even touched."

On Feb. 23, Washington said he contacted TFR and Debris Tech and directed them to reduce bucket trucks from roughly 25 countywide to two per supervisor district (10 trucks) and to focus only on trees and limbs that pose a direct roadway hazard.

"We put two bucket trucks per district," Washington said. "Right now they're basically cutting those things up high that pose a risk to the roadway, not so much the right-of-way."

Under the revised approach, hangers and leaners that will not fall into the roadway are generally being left in place as a cost-saving measure. Work on roads within the national forest where there are few homes has been minimized, and hangers and leaners along state highways are not being cut except in limited circumstances. One exception cited was Highway 7 south of Coffeeville, where trees are hanging over the highway.

TFR representative Mike Mejia estimated that about

40 percent of leaning and hanging trees along county rights-of-way have been cut as of Monday's meeting. He also said that after one week of hauling debris from roadsides to debris management sites for burning and chipping, approximately 10 percent of the debris pickup has been completed.

Supervisors emphasized that roadway safety remains the priority.

"We've sort of laid the groundwork," Washington said. "We still want him to focus on anything that would affect the roads. Is that the consensus of the board? ... And if it's in a gray area that may affect the road, we want to cut it."

The remaining supervisors signaled agreement with the scaled-back cutting approach.

Supervisors also cited a tentative April 1 deadline to have debris removed from public rights-of-way under current FEMA guidelines — effectively giving residents less than a month to move storm debris from private yards to the roadside if they want it included in the county's pickup effort. Supervisors stressed that debris must be at the roadside before that cutoff in order to be eligible under the current FEMA collection plan.

### Cash Flow Options

Because the county must front the money and wait for reimbursement — 75 percent from FEMA and 12.5 percent from MEMA — Board Attorney Shannon Crow outlined possible financing options.

Crow said officials with BankFirst have indicated they would consider emergency financing, potentially structured as a revolving line of credit that could be paid down as reimbursement funds arrive. He said FNB of Water Valley may also be willing to entertain a similar arrangement.

"It could potentially be done as a line of credit," Crow said. "As the reim-



**Happy Birthday**  
**Larry Tritt is turning 90!**  
**There will be a Birthday Party in his honor March 22 at the JCH Banquet Hall from 2-4 PM.**  
**Please join us!**

I would like to say a big Thank You to Kyle Jeffreys and sons, Levi and Luke.  
 I had a flat tire on the road between their house and Kyle's parents house. And they came to my rescue.  
 This is only one of the many reasons why I believe we live in the best town there is.  
 When someone is in need of help there are great people like the Jeffreys guys to help out.  
 Thank You,  
 Tammy Beshears

bursement comes, we'll pay it down, and it's just added back on."

However, Crow cautioned that a state statute governing emergency borrowing requires the loan to mature in a year.

"The loan has to mature March the 15th of 2027," Crow said about borrowing the money. "What happens when you get in a situation where you've got a matured loan and we haven't gotten the bulk of this reimbursement?"

Crow said issuing a traditional bond may be the safer option, and supervisors instructed the board attorney to prepare financing options to have options in place should action become nec-

essary.

Meanwhile, ER Assist representative Joe LoBianco reminded supervisors that the county remains responsible for the 12.5 percent local share. If overall costs reach \$7 million, that portion would total roughly \$875,000. He urged the board to document volunteer labor, donated meals, county equipment use and other in-kind contributions, which can be credited toward that obligation.

Supervisors are scheduled to meet again at 8 a.m. Friday at the Water Valley courthouse with LoBianco to begin formally tallying volunteer and in-kind contributions tied to the storm response.



**TEACHER OF THE MONTH:** Miss Danielle Martin was named Teacher of the Month for February 2026 at Millington Elementary School where she teaches fifth grade. Miss Martin is the daughter of C. W. and Jophine Martin of Coffeeville.



**CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH**  
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 CashApp \$DavisInd5  
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*will host a*  
**Benefit Singing for**  
**Jessica and Corey Davis**  
**March 14, 2026**

Meal Plates - \$15 each  
 Serving 3PM until sold out  
 \*Hamburger plate  
 \*BBQ sandwich plate  
 \*Plates include: side, dessert, and drink

Singing Begins at 5PM  
 Special Guests:  
 Michelle Kendall (Coffeeville, MS)  
 David McMillen (Detroit, AL)  
 The Canaanlanders (Oxford, MS)

On February 22, 2026, Jessica and Corey Davis lost their home in Columbia to a devastating fire. Jessica is the daughter of Thelma Brown and the late Emmitt Brown of Coffeeville.

During this incredibly difficult time, we want to come together as a community to support Jessica, Corey, Raeligh, Corey J. and Sadie Belle as they begin the process of rebuilding their lives.

Please join us for a special night of love, singing, fellowship, and food as we lift them up and help meet their needs. All donations will go directly to the Davis family.

Come hungry, bring a friend, and enjoy a wonderful evening while helping this family rebuild.

**For more information contact Michelle 662-230-2349 or Thelma 662-809-9889**