



Keith Cunningham of Chauvin, La., consults with NCEM officials on an alternate route home Saturday evening at the I-55 South on-ramp on Highway 94.

County officials prepare for worst

By MATTHEW COLEMAN
STAFF WRITER

As Hurricane Katrina closed in the Gulf of Mexico Saturday, Brookhaven and Lincoln County officials made preparations should the impact worsen.

Chief Executive Michael Clifford Galley reported relatively smooth operations Saturday night.

"Everything's going OK now," Galley said.

Earlier Saturday, Galley met with city and county officials, who declared a local state of emergency.

"Hopefully, we have all our emergency services prepared after meeting this afternoon," Galley said.

On Brookhaven Boulevard Saturday night, several companies parking lots

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were full and drivers were being kept from parking lots weren't full, but clerks reported customers who made earlier reservations to fill them later in the night and Sunday.

"We're getting a lot of walk-in and calls," said Monte Paul at Best Western on Major Drive.

Paul and Peggy May, regional fleet clerk at the County Convention Inn, reported a few transactions. Kasey Brown, who could offer only a temporary respite for evacuating families.

"They're wanting to get somewhere and be settled," May said. "They're going further north."

Health officials said those with over-

viewed had also were here a place for several days. May said she checked with other local health centers Saturday and they were also booked for the next few days.

"They're in the same situation as we're in," May said.

While many travelers were heading north, Katrina killed was heading south on Interstate 95 when she learned of the hurricane's path Saturday afternoon. Billie, of Port Sulphur, La., about 50 miles south of New Orleans, was returning after picking up her daughter, Alexis, at Louisiana Community College in Chalmette.

"We know there was a storm, but

I-55 South closed to traffic for evacuees fleeing Louisiana

By ANDREW SCOTT
STAFF WRITER

Brookhaven: Early Saturday morning, Governor Haley Barbour issued a directive to take place on Interstate 55, closing off all southbound lanes, to help Louisiana residents evacuate from Hurricane Katrina.

The closure took effect at 4 p.m. Saturday and will last until 4 p.m.

Katrina moving in

A hurricane watch has been extended to Hattiesburg's coast as Hurricane Katrina slowly steams in the Gulf of Mexico.

Hurricane Katrina (category 1) located southeast of Hattiesburg
24.0°N 91.7°W
24.0°N 91.7°W
24.0°N 91.7°W

Projected path
Intensity of movement
Hurricane watch



SOURCE: National Weather Service

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today. All lanes will travel northbound again only after 4 p.m. Saturday. The closure will last until 4 p.m. Sunday. The closure will last until 4 p.m. Sunday.

American Red Cross officials began to open shelters Saturday in Mississippi that are north of Interstate 20. As shelters open, they will be posted on FEMA's Web site at www.emergency.gov. Evacuees through Brookhaven can access the Internet at the Brookhaven Public Library on South Jackson Street.

The National American Red Cross is encouraging travelers to develop a communication plan with relatives prior to their departure should they need to be located during or after the hurricane.

"Typically the phone lines become jammed afterwards with people calling to get in touch with relatives," said Katrina Hadden, a spokeswoman for the national American Red Cross.

In preparing for the hurricane, Emergency is implementing its emergency evacuation plan, which will field a combination of 1,500 emergency line workers in Mississippi. Emergency contacted all employees available to ensure resources are available.

"We have been tracking Katrina for several days," said Ramsey Green, emergency assistant and service manager in Brookhaven. "Our customers can be confident we are doing all we can to ensure we are prepared for this storm."