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Updates as they come in on Katrina

09:21 PM CDT on Wednesday, August 31, 2005

Tom Planchet

9:17 P.M. - E-mail report from viewer Jorge Bravo:

My good friend, Mark Ottman, from Berkeley, CA, has been staying at the Fairmont since Friday. I haven't been able to get through to him today, but I did speak to him last night, using the main hotel phone number. He told me that were guests still trapped there, staff, and even families of staff, who have moved into the hotel. He estimated about 1000 people there, with a lot of people camped out in the halls. There's no plumbing, no electricity, no water, and no food. As of last night there was a couple of feet of water on Baronne St.; I suspect it got higher today. I was able to reach the hotel operator again today, but not my friend. The operator said that as of early this afternoon there hadn't been any evacuations. Hope this info helps. I would be grateful for any info you might have.

9:15 P.M. - Entergy - Can't begin to assess damage or work on damage until water goes down. In some areas, power could be back 2-4 weeks, other areas 2-3 months.

9:13 P.M. - Entergy - 9,000 line workers on the way to metro New Orleans area.

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9:11 P.M. - Cleco says it believes a tornado struck Eden Isles.

8:44 P.M. - BATON ROUGE, La. (AP) -- Gov. Kathleen Blanco bristled at suggestions Louisiana perhaps didn't make enough preparations for a devastating hurricane, possibly worsening the devastation.

"We begged all of those people, the mayors begged those people, the parish presidents begged those people to get out," she said at a press briefing when questioned about the state's preparedness efforts.

8:41 P.M. - BATON ROUGE, La. (AP) -- More than 7,600 prisoners had to be moved from jails in the New Orleans area because of flooding and unsanitary conditions caused by Hurricane Katrina -- prompting such widespread rumors of riots and jail breaks that Corrections Secretary Richard Stalder focused Wednesday on setting the story straight during a briefing with reporters.

"We cannot find any credible intelligence that the kinds of things that had been reported have happened," he said.

8:39 P.M. - EDWARDSVILLE, Ill. (AP) -- A Madison County, Illinois, prosecutor is leaving this week for the Gulf Coast to offer assistance to some lower profile hurricane victims -- family pets.

Amy Maher is a coordinator for a national organization called Noah's Wish, which works to save as many pets as possible during such catastrophes.

More than a hundred Noah's Wish volunteers are expected to arrive in Louisiana tomorrow.

Various Louisiana animal welfare groups are managing animal evacuations and recovery plans for New Orleans pets and displaced animals.

The Louisiana Veterinary Medical Association is currently accepting pets at the Blackham Coliseum in Lafayette, LSU in Shreveport, the Monroe Civic Center for small animals and the Ike Hamilton Center for large animals in Monroe.

Pets are also being accepted at the Farmer's Market in Alexandria, and the LSU Agriculture Center at Parker Coliseum in Baton Rouge.

8:37 P.M. - BATON ROUGE, La. (AP) -- It's an engineering problem that hasn't been solved: How do you plug a broken floodwall and drain a city that is submerged in water in many areas? Officials acknowledge plans to "unwater New Orleans" have failed, have been redrawn and are continuing to evolve.

The first was to use helicopters to drop hefty sandbags and giant concrete barriers to plug the hole in the floodwall of a canal which usually drains water from New Orleans and Jefferson Parish.

Crews had already moved in the 250 concrete walls and hundreds of sandbags when the problems cropped up. Transportation and engineering officials questioned whether the original structure was sound enough to hold against the pressure from the water.

So, they tweaked the plans and were working to hire a contractor to drive steel, sheet metal pilings down across the canal to stop water in the lake from moving into the canal before it ever got to the floodwall.

That still was difficult. The pilings need to go down beyond 30 feet to fully block the flow of water, according to Michael B. Rogers, with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

In the meantime, the corps was planning to punch deliberate breaches into the levee system along Lake Pontchartrain, moving from east to west, cutting notches that would let the water flow back out of New Orleans and into the lake, Rogers said. "People are in

the air right now locating the best places to do that," Rogers said Wednesday.

7:53 P.M. - Cleco estimates one month minimum to get power back to all customers.

7:52 P.M. - State school superintendent asks other districts around the state to take in schoolchildren displaced by the storms. [The latest update on Louisiana schools from the state Department of Education.](#)

7:32 P.M. - N.O. Mayor Ray Nagin declares Martial law in the city and directs the city's 1,500-person police force to do "whatever it takes" to gain back control of the city. He will also enlist the aid of troops.

7:20 P.M. - Pharmaceutical companies rounded up much-needed medicine, water suppliers loaded trucks with thirst-quenching cargo and companies from petroleum giants to beer makers pitched in millions in cash and products Wednesday to help communities battered by Hurricane Katrina.

The efforts to collect money and goods to help the Gulf Coast rebuild gathered momentum Wednesday as officials continued assessing the damage from one of the nation's worst natural disasters.

American Red Cross spokeswoman Sarah Marchetti said at least 30 companies had made donations by Wednesday morning, and the number was expected to climb.

"They've been pouring in," she said.

In Indianapolis, drug maker Eli Lilly & Co. prepared to send 40,000 vials of refrigerated insulin to patients in the Southeast, along with at least \$1 million in cash to the American Red Cross.

"We're poised to ship as soon as we get the OK," Lilly spokesman Edward Sagebiel said.

7:17 P.M. - Cleco says it's likely that a tornado touched down in Eden Isles.

7:12 P.M. - (AP) -- New Orleans Mayor Ray says he's not taking any criticism from people stranded in New Orleans personally.

Nagin says he understands the city's residents are frustrated, hot, angry and in a state of shock.

But Nagin insists he wants everyone out of the Superdome by tomorrow (Thursday) because they have been stretched to the breaking point and he can't stand to see them in that condition any longer.

7:11 P.M. Governor Blanco on looting: We will do what it takes to bring law and order to our area. This is not a place for that behavior. I'm furious. It's intolerable.

7:05 P.M. [Click for 7 p.m. Northshore update.](#)

5:43 P.M. - WWL-TV: An Army Corps of Engineers spokesman said they are beginning to drop sandbags and into the levee breach, and will drive metal sheet pilings to seal off the canal in order to fully repair the breach.

5:40 P.M. - WWL-TV: Walter Maestri voiced his concern that relief isn't coming fast enough for the evacuees.

5:32 P.M. - WWL-TV: 10 to 15 feet of water still in some areas. The river levee was damaged, eroded during the storm.

5:26 P.M. - (AP) Health and Human Services
Department declares a public health emergency, sends medical supplies, hospital beds and public health officers.

5:23 P.M. - (AP) If Mayor Nagin's estimate that thousands perished under Hurricane Katrina is true, this would be the nation's deadliest natural disaster since at least the 1906 San Francisco earthquake.

5:20 P.M. - Louisiana Attorney General Charles Foti said temporary prison and court rooms will be built in order to maintain the justice system in the area.

5:17 P.M. - Officials from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers estimate it will be weeks before all the water that flowed into the city through breached levees can be pumped back out. After that, it will take several years -- and many billions of dollars -- to rebuild homes, offices, streets and highways. [Click here.](#)

5:10 P.M. - AUSTIN, TX (AP): Texas public schools will enroll children of Hurricane Katrina refugees sheltered within each district.

The Texas Education Agency has been directed to provide all needed support for districts having to absorb children from Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama. TEA has said the refugee children can qualify as "homeless" and may enroll without proof of residence.

Also, normal immunization requirements for attending school or child-care facilities in Texas will be temporarily waived for children displaced by the hurricane. Schools are allowed to waive the 22-to-one teacher-student requirement.

Districts with an influx of 50 or more students can get an immediate funding increase, rather than waiting until the end of the school year.

Austin schools are working to ensure the students get backpacks, school supplies and clothes.

5:08 P.M. - (AP): President Bush is warning Americans about the nation's gasoline supply, saying everyone must understand that Hurricane Katrina has had a significant effect.

5:06 P.M. - Plans are in place to begin fixing the broken levee system beginning tomorrow.

5:04 P.M. - Officials are asking anyone with a boat that wants to help with rescue operations to call 225-765-2706.

4:59 P.M. - Because of the evacuation of Orleans Parish prisons and jails, capacity of state prisons has increased 72%. Law enforcement officials said any stories of a massive breakout of Orleans Parish Prison were inaccurate. The prisoners were moved to a nearby on-ramp by guards and were transported to other facilities in the state.

4:50 P.M. - Gov. Blanco: "I want to thank (Texas Governor) Rick Perry (for allowing evacuees to be moved to the Houston Astrodome)." The Governor referred to New Orleans as a "primate site." Blanco said her goal is to save as many people as possible, but had sharp remarks for those who have taken part in any looting going on in the affected areas. "We are going to restore law and order," she said. "We will do whatever it takes."

"Addresses mean nothing at point, because street signs are underwater." - Blanco on the abilities of rescue workers to locate those in trouble, based on specific addresses sent in to emergency operators by family members.

4:38 P.M. - (AP): Some major airlines are canceling flights to New Orleans and Gulfport, Mississippi, until at least next week. The move heats up the financial pressure on the air industry, cutting off two major destinations at the end of the summer tourism season.

4:30 P.M. - WASHINGTON (AP): An additional 10,000 National Guard troops from across the country began pouring into the Gulf Coast region Wednesday, adding new soldiers and airmen to shore up security, rescue and relief operations in the region ravaged by Hurricane Katrina.

The new units brought the number of troops dedicated to the effort to more than 28,000, in what may be the largest military response to a national disaster.

About one-third of the 21,000 National Guard troops -- who were descending on the Gulf Coast from across the country -- will be used for security, to prevent looting, enforce curfews and enhance local law and order, said Lt. Gen. Steven Blum, commander of U.S. National Guard forces.

4:16 P.M. - President Bush: Recovery "will take years" from the storm that laid waste to the Gulf Coast.

4:15 P.M. - President Bush: 78,000 people are in shelters.

4:12 P.M. - President Bush: We are witnessing one of the worst natural disasters in our history.

Bush: This recovery will take years.

Bush: First priority to save lives. Second to supply food for survivors, rescue workers and other citizens.

4:11 P.M. - BANDA ACEH, Indonesia (AP) -- The scenes of devastation from the Gulf Coast are all too familiar to survivors of the December tsunami in Asia.

A World Bank executive in Sri Lanka says she prays and hopes not many women in the U.S. will suffer as she has. She lost her brother in the December 26 tsunami that raked over Asian nations. She and others have

strong memories of the event when they see the destruction left by Hurricane Katrina.

An Indonesian man who lost his wife the tsunami says he would like to help the victims of Hurricane Katrina, but all he has is prayers.

Another man, who lost his wife and daughter in December, says, "God has made us equals in birth, life and death."

Though damage from Katrina is enormous, the rising death count is far short of the 200-thousand dead or missing following the tsunami.

4:07 P.M. - LSU offers UNO, Tulane and Loyola students chance to enroll for school at the Baton Rouge campus to continue their learning, waiving most fees for those who have already paid other universities.

4:05 P.M. - LSU football game this weekend postponed due to the stadium area being used to bring in injured and take care of evacuees. Tulane at Southern Miss game postponed.

4:03 P.M. - (AP) Michael Leavitt, secretary of Health and Human Services, announced he had declared a public health emergency in the area stretching from Louisiana to Florida. "We are gravely concerned about the potential for cholera, typhoid and dehydrating diseases that could come as a result of the stagnant water and the conditions," he said.

Chertoff and Leavitt spoke at a news conference attended by an unusual array of department and agency heads, each of whom came equipped with a list of actions already taken by the administration.

For his part, Bush flew over the storm-affected area during the day on his way to Washington from his Texas ranch. With the administration eager to demonstrate a rapid responsiveness to the human tragedy, the

president also arranged to make public remarks in the Rose Garden after returning to the White House.

3:55 P.M. - 40-year veteran photographer Willie Wilson: Maybe one other time in my career did I shoot pictures crying.

3:54 P.M. - Wilson: People were passing out in the heat in front of me.

3:52 P.M. - Chalmette man. I spent 40 hours on a roof then God sent a boat from a neighbor's house floating by and we took it to safety.

3:52 P.M. - (AP) Gov. Kathleen Blanco has said that she wants the Superdome evacuated within two days because the situation has been worsening there. The water has been rising, the air conditioning was out and toilets were broken.

3:50 P.M. - Crying woman: "I'll never stay for a hurricane again."

3:49 P.M. - Survivor from Chalmette: We spent two days on a roof, swam to a storefront, food was pouring out, we ate it, we drank the water. We had to do something. There's no help.

3:48 P.M. - WASHINGTON (AP) -- From Navy ships and Army helicopters to the USNS Comfort hospital ship, the Pentagon is mobilizing possibly an unprecedented U.S. rescue-and-relief mission for areas devastated by Hurricane Katrina.

3:47 P.M. - Man rescued after spending night on Chalmette High School roof for two days: "It's all gone."

3:46 P.M. - Tugboat captain: We have so little help. Send us some food and water immediately!

3:45 P.M. (AP) - Hurricane Katrina probably killed thousands of people in New Orleans, the mayor said Wednesday -- an estimate that, if accurate, would make the storm the nation's deadliest natural disaster since at least the 1906 San Francisco earthquake.

"We know there is a significant number of dead bodies in the water," and other people dead in attics, Mayor Ray Nagin said. Asked how many, he said: "Minimum, hundreds. Most likely, thousands."

The frightening estimate came as Army engineers struggled to plug New Orleans' breached levees with giant sandbags and concrete barriers, while authorities drew up plans to clear out the tens of thousands of people left in the Big Easy and all but abandon the flooded-out city. Many of the evacuees -- including thousands now staying in the Superdome -- will be moved to the Astrodome in Houston, 350 miles away.

3:44 P.M. - Tugboat captain who rescued those in Chalmette. "Without more help, many people will die."

3:43 P.M. - Photographer Willie Wilson: Those rescued from Chalmette homes are dazed, don't know where they are going and just asking for water and to find family members.

3:42 P.M. - Wilson: You can't fathom it. I've covered tragedies around the world, never thought it would be here.

3:41 P.M. - (AP) -- With law officers and National Guardsmen focused on saving lives, looters around the city spent another day Wednesday brazenly ransacking stores for food, beer, clothing, appliances -- and guns.

Gov. Kathleen Blanco said she has asked the White House to send more people to help with evacuations and rescues, thereby freeing up National Guardsmen to stop looters.

"Once we get the 3,000 National Guardsmen here, we're locking this place down," Mayor Ray Nagin said. "It's really difficult because my opinion of the looting is it started with people running out of food, and you can't really argue with that too much. Then it escalated to this kind of mass chaos where people are taking electronic stuff and all that."

Amid the chaos Wednesday, thieves commandeered a forklift and used it to push up the storm shutters and break the glass of a pharmacy. The crowd stormed the store, carrying out so much ice, water and food that it dropped from their arms as they ran. The street was littered with packages of ramen noodles and other items.

Looters also chased down a state police truck full of food. The New Orleans police chief ran off looters while city officials themselves were commandeering equipment from a looted Office Depot. During a state of emergency, authorities have broad powers to take private supplies and buildings for their use.

3:40 P.M. - WWL photographer Willie Wilson: People being rescued from Chalmette were begging for water, wanted to talk to family members. People rescued in Chalmette were ferried across to Algiers. People hot and parched from days on roof tops.

3:38 P.M. - HOUSTON (AP) -- Red Cross workers today began transforming what was once known as the Eighth Wonder of the World -- into temporary housing.

Buses will shuttle thousands of Hurricane Katrina evacuees from the Superdome in New Orleans to the vacant Astrodome in Houston.

Cots and blankets for up to 25-thousand people are being set up on the Astrodome floor.

Other areas of the stadium are being configured to accommodate refugees with varying needs, including a nursery. Stadium managers are working to get T-V's and

find programming to allow people to keep up with the latest news about flooded New Orleans.

The Astrodome agreement was worked out by Texas Governor Rick Perry and Louisiana Governor Kathleen Blanco.

3:35 P.M. - Truong - Large parts of oak trees down on St. Charles Avenue near Audubon Park.

3:33 P.M. - (AP) -- The latest video from New Orleans shows apartment buildings with people crowded on balconies and roofs. Below, flood waters lap at the second floor. Two children standing on one roof held up a sign that read: "Help us."

A Blackhawk helicopter crew rescued at least eight people from a roof where, in red spray paint, was written the words "Diabetic, Heart Transplant, Need transportation."

Two-by-two, the chopper hoisted the people off the roof as the wash from its rotors blew shingles off another section of the building and caused small waves in the water below.

Other shots show people standing at windows and on balconies, some waving white towels to attract the attention of possible rescuers.

The flood waters cover everything as far as the eye can see.

In the bright sunlight, there's a sheen caused by gasoline seeping from the underground tanks of a gas station. Three people who were standing in the bed of a flooded pickup truck later waded and swam through those waters, trying to reach safety.

3:25 P.M. - Truong: A man said he was carjacked at gunpoint. Other residents of the Uptown-area say they

are afraid to leave their homes because of the lack of security.

3:18 P.M. - WWL-TV's Thanh Truong reports the water from the Lake is rising to meet with the River in Uptown.

3:10 P.M. - (AP) President Bush flew overhead in Air Force One to assess the damage in Southeast Louisiana and the Gulfport-area of Mississippi. [Click here](#).

3:04 P.M. - Congressman William Jefferson said BET will host a telethon to raise money for the flood victims. The telethon will be Friday, September 9.

3:01 P.M. - The latest video from New Orleans shows apartment buildings with people crowded on balconies and roofs. Below, flood waters lap at the second floor. Two children standing on one roof held up a sign that read: "Help us." [Click here](#).

2:45 P.M. - WWL-TV's Bill Capo reports traffic moving west out of New Orleans is moving slowly but steadily. He said the Baton Rouge Airport is being used as a launchpad for Black Hawk army helicopters and Coast Guard helicopters. At one point during the trip, Capo said the helicopter pilot had to execute an emergency landing at a truck stop parking lot in order to check for mechanical problems.

2:20 P.M. - From Weezie Porter: WWL-TV Sales account executive. I evacuated with my family to Nashville. The people we are staying with have a relative in the Chateau Living Center in Kenner 716 Village Road. Their phone is working from time to time 504-464-0604. They report that all of the nurses have left, Only a few aides left there that have been working since Friday. They were supposed to be evacuated by bus but they did not show up. No medications have been given since Sunday,. 4 patients have died.

2:19 P.M. - (AP) More than 100 Tulane University students displaced by Hurricane Katrina arrived at

Southern Methodist University Wednesday, including the entire football team.

2:04 P.M. - WAFB-TV video shows hundreds of people in the Uptown area near Claiborne and Napoleon, stuck in apartments and other buildings and waving for help. Helicopters are rescuing one or two at a time.

2:00 P.M. - Air Force One spotted

1:50 P.M. - Ross: Access limited to Oak Harbor and Eden Isles. Most homes are still standing, but have sustained either water or wind damage, or both.

1:45 P.M. - WWL-TV's Mike Ross says "do not come back (to Slidell and Grand Isle)."

1:39 P.M. - Hoss: Wind damage seen at the Target store on Clearview Pkwy.

1:28 P.M. - WWL-TV's Mike Hoss said the I-10/Causeway interchange has turned into a massive first aid station. 50 ambulances are stationed there, and those who need immediate medical attention are being kept there in tents. Black Hawk helicopters and other rescue copters are constantly ferrying evacuees in to the area.

1:20 P.M. - (AP) Mayor Ray Nagin says at least hundreds of people are dead -- maybe thousands -- in New Orleans. "We know there is a significant number of dead bodies in the water," and others dead in attics, Mayor Ray Nagin said. Asked how many, he said: "Minimum, hundreds. Most likely, thousands."

1:12 P.M. - WWL-TV's Josh McElveen describes the stench coming from the bathrooms in the Superdome as horrific.

1:03 P.M. - Mayor Nagin: Medical ship on the way to New Orleans.

12:56 P.M. - Governor Blanco - Time is not on our side for stopping the levee break. There were two breaches, when we thought there was only one. Communicatiion, or lack of same caused the problem.

12:55 P.M. - MIAMI (AP) -- Miami-based Carnival Cruise Lines says it is considering a federal request that the company use some of its cruise ships as emergency shelters or help in Hurricane Katrina relief efforts in some other way.

12:53 P.M. - Governor Blanco - thousands still need to be rescued.

12:52 P.M. - Governor Blanco: We will rebuild.

12:51 P.M. - Governor Blanco: The magnitude of this is overwhelming.

12:15 P.M. - Army Corps: 1,200 sandbags that are 20,000 pounds each are being brought in to bridge gap...water level is no longer rising.

12:11 P.M. - Army Corps: Water has become level with the Lake in the city so no more water should flow into the city, except at high tide.

12:10 P.M. - Engineers and construction experts are at the 17th Street Canal. They've filled 100, 3,000 pound sandbags and are trying to drop the bags and concrete barriers into the area.

11:49 A.M. - (AP) AUSTIN, Texas -- Texas is opening its doors to hurricane refugees from neighboring Louisiana.

Texas Governor Rick Perry says he expects evacuees to start arriving within the next 24 hours at the Houston Astrodome. He says Louisiana Governor Kathleen Blanco asked him this morning if the Astrodome could house

the 23-thousand people currently being sheltered at the Superdome in Louisiana, and he quickly agreed. He says even before the request, Texas officials had been talking about using the Astrodome as a long-term shelter for people already stranded in Texas because of the storm.

Perry says the hurricane survivors are welcome in Texas for "as long as they want to stay." Children who are sheltered at the Astrodome will be able to attend public schools in Houston. Perry says the Astrodome schedule has been cleared through December.

11:46 A.M. - WASHINGTON (AP) -- Federal emergency officials are looking for two-thousand Homeland Security Department workers to volunteer for hurricane relief efforts. The head of the Federal Emergency Management Agency has told Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff a-thousand people are needed within 48 hours and two-thousand within a week.

11:40 - (AP) Roving bands of looters are breaking into stores in Carrollton area to get food and supplies. They've also stolen guns and armed themselves.

11:33 A.M. - Director Walter Maestri: We have no food or water for the evacuees. Says emergency workers have seized the food and water and drinks from Sam's Club, Wal-Mart and other groceries for evacuees, but he said that is all gone. Says water supply is gone. More water expected, but its not there right now. Says evacuees are getting upset and harried.

11:32 A.M. - Director Walter Maestri: FEMA and national agencies not delivering the help nearly as fast as it is needed.

11:30 A.M. - Emergency Operations Director Walter Maestri: Evacuees from New Orleans and the east bank of Jefferson are flocking to the west bank, overwhelming the facilities.

10:58 A.M. - (AP) The New Orleans International Airport has reopened to allow humanitarian flights in

and out, officials said Wednesday.

10:55 A.M. - (AP) The Dallas school district says it'll enroll in district schools the children of any Hurricane Katrina refugees that ask for it.

10:52 A.M. - (AP) Every branch of the U.S. military is involved in the rescue-and-relief mission following Hurricane Katrina. The U.S. Northern Command is coordinating search and rescue, medical help and supplies. The work will support the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the states of Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama.

10:14 A.M. - WWL-TV: Governor Blanco confirms plans to move evacuees to the Houston Astrodome. Blanco said she remains in contact with the White House, and has asked for a military presence in New Orleans, adding it was important to stabilize things as soon as possible. Buses are on their way to the Superdome to remove the evacuees.

10:06 A.M. - WWL-TV: Gas prices expected to rise by as much as \$1.10 by this weekend.

10:00 A.M. - State Insurance Commissioner Robert Wooley: People interested in checking up on their insurance can contact the Dept. of Insurance at 1-800-259-5300 or online at LDI.state.la.us. Nationwide damage estimates stand at \$26 billion, and \$17 to \$19 billion in Louisiana alone.

9:51 A.M. - WWL-TV: No information available from Washington and Tangipahoa Parishes.

9:48 A.M. - WWL-TV: St. Charles Parish residents may return to their homes to grab personal items before leaving the area.

9:46 A.M. - CNN: Commercial flights coming out of New Orleans International Airport could resume in two months.

9:31 A.M. - WWL-TV: UNO campus surrounded by water.

9:30 A.M. - WWL-TV: Lakefront Airport is totally submerged.

9:22 A.M. - (AP) Looting broke out in some New Orleans neighborhoods today, prompting authorities to send more than 70 additional officers and an armed personnel carrier into the city.

Police say one officer was shot in the head by a looter yesterday, but is expected to recover.

The (New Orleans) Times-Picayune reports today that a Wal-Mart in the Lower Garden District was looted, and the entire gun collection was taken.

9:09 A.M. - (AP) VATICAN: Pope Benedict says he is praying for victims of Hurricane Katrina and urged rescue workers to persevere in bringing comfort to survivors.

9:04 A.M. - (AP) Plans are being put into place to transport evacuees from the Superdome to the Houston Astrodome via a bus convoy.

8:41 A.M. - Gov. Blanco and Archbishop Hughes lead the State O.E.P. in prayer. "We look to (God) for our care," Hughes said. The Governor said monumental work lay ahead, and that a "higher power" was needed.

7:59 A.M. - Suzanne Parsons: St. Tammany Parish Sheriff's Office - 2,186 in public shelters in St. Tammany and number is growing.

7:49 A.M. - Governor Blanco: Four Navy ships headed to New Orleans with food and water.

7:38 A.M. - CNN report...another attempt will be made to sandbag the 17th Street Canal.

7:24 A.M. - Slidell Mayor Ben Morris: Electricity is six to 12 weeks away.

7:06 A.M. - Governor Blanco wants the Superdome evacuated within two days.

6:57 A.M. - Governor Blanco: "Absolutely necessary" that the Army Corps of Engineers drop sandbags into the levee breach.

6:50 A.M. - Sen. Landrieu: The whole parish of St. Bernard is gone.

6:27 A.M. - (AP) Conditions in New Orleans hospitals deteriorate. [Click for story.](#)

6:22 A.M. - (AP) No time to count the dead as rescue efforts [Click for story.](#)

6:20 A.M. - Governor Blanco: Estimated 20,000 people in dome and they will be dispersed around the state to rescue centers being set up. Situation 'unteneable' in Superdome.

6:13 A.M. - Governor Blanco: Essential personnel will stay in city, but general public needs to go. Logistical nightmare to bring in food and water.

6:11 A.M. - Governor Blanco: We have found places around the state to house the refugees, we just need to get them out.

6:10 A.M. - (AP) -- Energy Secretary Samuel Bodman says the Bush administration will release oil from petroleum reserves to help refiners affected by Hurricane Katrina.

5:55 A.M. GOVERNOR BLANCO: Stopping the looting is important, but saving lives a higher priority right now. Not sure where looters think they are taking the stuff since city may soon be under water.

12:17 A.M. - *Emergency search and rescue phone lines for those in distress:* (225) 925-7708 | (225) 925-7709 | (225) 925-3511 | (225) 925-7412

To inquire about those in the area who did not evacuate: American Red Cross, (866) 438-4636.

WEDNESDAY 12:12 A.M. - Info on parish and road access:

St. Charles: Only St. Charles parish residents can return to their homes. There is no power, low fuel and no food. If you must return home, please bring supplies with you. Hwy 90, I-10, Hwy 3127 and Airline are all open. However, there is water on Airline near the St. Charles/Jefferson Parish line.

Terrebonne: No road closures. Use Hwy 90 or the Sunshine Bridge.

Lafourche : As of 2 p.m. Monday, the curfew was lifted. Go directly to your homes. Hwy 1 is closed between Golden Meadow and Grande Isle.

St. James: Open to residents only.

St. John: Open to residents only. You need your ID.

Jefferson: You can return Monday with your ID. You will be allowed to collect your belongings and will not be allowed to return for a month.

Orleans: Closed. The Highrise is not safe to cross. Many parts of I-10 are flooded.

Plaqueumines: Closed.

St. Bernard: Closed.

St. Tammany: I-10 and the Twinspans are destroyed, but the Hwy 11 bridge is intact.

Washington: No information available. Lines are busy!

Tangiphoa: No information available. Lines are busy.

Other road information:

--Hwy 90 between Lafayette and St. Charles Parish line/Lafourche parish line is open.

--Hwy 308/Valentine, south of that area is closed.

--Hwy 3185 (Thibodeaux Bypass) is closed.

--La Bourg Larose Hwy is closed.

11:28 P.M. - (AP) LAFAYETTE, La. -- Parents who had to evacuate because of Hurricane Katrina will be able to register their children for school in Lafayette Parish starting tomorrow.

Burnell Lemoine, deputy superintendent and chief academic officer for the Lafayette Parish School System, says registration ends Thursday and parents will be contacted Friday to let them know what school their children should attend.

He says students should be in classes by Tuesday. The children will be assigned to current schools depending

on where they are in homes or shelters.

9:23 P.M. - FEMA bringing 2,000 officials to town. Bringing in food, water, ice, tarps. Setting up offices where you can get grants and loans.

9:21 P.M. - (AP) One Mississippi county alone said its death toll was at least 100, and officials are "very, very worried that this is going to go a lot higher," said Joe Spraggins, civil defense director for Harrison County, home to Biloxi and Gulfport.

Thirty of the victims in the county were from a beachfront apartment building that collapsed under a 25-foot wall of water as Katrina slammed the Gulf Coast with 145-mph winds.

9:19 P.M. - Lt. Governor Landrieu: Asking hotels in neighboring states to extend stays of refugees and to give them first priority and to possibly offer discounts for extended stays.

9:18 P.M. - Lt. Governor Mitch Landrieu: 3000 rescued to date. People taken from rooftops, attics and from water, clinging to inner tubes.

9:17 P.M. - New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin says hundreds, if not thousands, of people may still be stuck on roofs and in attics, and so rescue boats were bypassing the dead.

8:04 P.M. - Mayor Nagin: Unhappy that the helicopters slated to drop 3,000-pound bags into the levee never showed up to stop the flow of water. Too many chiefs calling shots he says.

7:59 P.M. - Mayor Nagin: Pumps at 17th street canal has failed and water will continue pouring into the city. Nine feet of water is expected on St. Charles Avenue that will be nine feet high. Water is expected to spread throughout the east bank of Orleans and possibly Jefferson Parish.

7:39 P.M. - WWL-TV's Karen Swensen - Algiers has downed trees and power lines but for the most part no water in homes. Some roof damage to some homes.

7:35 P.M. - Swensen: Camps on Highway 11 in Slidell are gone.

7:24 P.M. - John Marie of Plaquemines Parish Sheriff's Office: No one is allowed back into parish. Marshall law in effect. Forty-seven people were rescued by parish officials Monday and several dozen were rescued Tuesday.

7:22 P.M. - Marie: Belle Chasse suffered severe damage. South of Myrtle Grove completely under water. There are some, though unknown number, of dead bodies.

7:20 P.M. - Marie: Those rescued are airlifted to parish's highest point at the levee, dropped there with food and water and then the National Guard picks them up and sends them to the Belle Chasse auditorium. No looting reported.

6:41 P.M. - Efforts to stop the levee break at the 17th Street Canal have ended unsuccessfully and the water is expected to soon overwhelm the pumps in that area, allowing water to pour into the east bank of Metairie and Orleans to an expected height of 12-15 feet.

6:39 P.M. - JACKSON, Miss. (AP) -- Senator Trent Lott is urging President Bush to visit Mississippi in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, telling the president -- quote -- "the people of Mississippi are flat on their backs. They're going to need your help."

6:05 P.M. - Thomas: Saw at least three dead bodies during his rescues. Whole families were among those rescued.

6:04 P.M. - Thomas: Most sobering moment - being told to leave the dead bodies, because there are people to rescue.

6:03 P.M. - N.O. Councilman Oliver Thomas: "What you see on TV, you have no idea what the level of devastation and frustration is on the street."

5:57 P.M. - Jeff Parish schools chief Dianne Roussel says two months is probably "optimistic" to get schools back and functioning.

5:49 P.M. - (AP) WASHINGTON -- The Navy is sending three ships to the Gulf Coast with water and other supplies for those hit by Hurricane Katrina, but officials are urging service members not to try to return to their military bases in New Orleans.

5:46 P.M. - Four confirmed dead in St. Tammany. One died in traffic accident, one died after he stayed and a tree fell and trapped him in his home. Two others died by unknown reasons.

4:42 P.M. - (AP) Electric companies from around the country are rushing crews to the hurricane-ravaged South. They will help restore power to an area so devastated that it could be weeks or even months before the lights come back on in many places. David Botkins, a spokesman for Dominion Virginia Power, says 200 workers are headed to Louisiana and Mississippi.

4:40 P.M. - (AP) State officials say they are working on plans to evacuate inmates from the Orleans Parish prison and the Jefferson Parish jail. Both facilities face a threat of flooding.

The state Corrections Department is trying to figure out how to transfer 4,000 inmates from the New Orleans jail and another 1,000 from the Jefferson Parish jail in Gretna.

The inmates would be moved to state prisons including the highest-security at Angola. Corrections spokesman

Pam LaBorde says it's quite a logistical situation to accomplish.

4:23 P.M. - Jefferson Parish officials say schools could reopen two months after Labor Day.

4:21 P.M. - WWL-TV Reporter quotes officials as saying there may now be 60,000 people in the Superdome and that more people are still being urged to go there.

3:59 P.M. - **WWL-TV reporter Jonathan Betz** reports widespread looting and WWL-TV cameras showed people walking out of Canal Street stores with racks of clothes and electronics. Some looters concentrated on basics and supplies, while others made no secret of their desire to get what they could.

3:53 P.M. - **N.O. Mayor Nagin: Priorities** - 1. Rescuing people. 2. Fixing levee breaks. 3. Taking care of refugees in Superdome and hospitals.

3:43 P.M. - Senator Vitter: New Orleans will "absolutely" be rebuilt.

3:25 P.M. - With conditions in the hurricane-ravaged city of New Orleans rapidly deteriorating, Gov. Kathleen Blanco said Tuesday that people now huddled in the Superdome and other rescue centers need to be evacuated.

"The situation is untenable," Blanco said during a news conference. "It's just heartbreaking."

3:15 P.M. - Charity Hospital is out of commission and they are trying to evacuate patients, but it is hard to get there because rising water is surrounding the hospital. They will try to evacuate the patients to other cities.

3:13 P.M. - **Governor Blanco:** A lot of people have lost their lives, but we have no numbers because the

priority is saving those who are alive so we don't have more casualties.

3:12 P.M. - Senator Vitter: Mayor Nagin's calm and control and command of the facts showed me that we have one of the best leaders in the country right here.

3:12 P.M. - Senator Landrieu - Scenes are similar to what she saw after the Tsunami.

3:11 P.M. - Senator Landrieu: Those who evacuated should be patient and thank God that they are okay because so many still need to get out.

3:09 P.M. - Senator Landrieu: Plenty of people still on rooftops in N.O. East waiting to be rescued. Every boat available is being used to try to save people.

3:07 P.M. - Governor Blanco: We are looking for ways to get people out of the Superdome and out of New Orleans said Governor Blanco as she tried to keep from crying.

3:03 P.M. - Latest on Northshore from St. Tammany Parish. [Click here.](#)

2:42 P.M. (AP) -- The question is not whether Congress will pass legislation to speed disaster relief to communities devastated by Hurricane Katrina, but how soon and how much. The answers: real soon and a lot.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency has \$2.5 billion in funds available for immediate assistance such as emergency shelters, food, and medical care, said Scott Milburn, spokesman for the White House budget office. But longer-term assistance, such as help in removing wreckage, rebuilding homes, and repairing highways and federal facilities will require a major infusion of cash provided by Congress.

2:39 P.M. - Jeff Parish councilman Tom Capella says pumps working near Veterans and West Esplanade and

water is receeding there. He says break in levee at 17th Street canal continues to pour water into Lakeview.

2:32 P.M. - LSU to begin classes next Tuesday.

2:30 P.M. - Coast Guard says it has rescued 1,200 people so far in Louisiana.

2:24 P.M. - (AP) -- Hurricane Katrina forced scores more flight cancellations involving New Orleans and other Southern cities Tuesday as airlines juggled their schedules around one of the worst storms on record.

2:09 P.M. - Video on WAFB-TV shows the Twin Spans between I-10 and Slidell broken in dozens of spots.

2:07 P.M. - (AP) -- A top casino executive is calling on the Mississippi Legislature to enact emergency legislation to keep the state's coast gaming industry alive.

Treasure Bay Casino President and CEO Bernie Burkholder says most of the casino hotels on the coast survived Hurricane Katrina, but several gambling barges suffered extensive damage. He says it could take several years to rebuild.

2:01 P.M. - Jefferson Parish President Aaron Broussard says there is no plumbing and the sanitary situation is getting nasty. He told WAFB-TV that he is carrying around a bag for his own human waste.

2:00 P.M. - Senator Thad Cochran of Mississippi says "this is going to be the most expensive natural disaster that's hit the United States in history."

1:30 P.M. - --The American Red Cross says it has thousands of volunteers mobilized for the hurricane. Spokesman Bradley Hague said it's the "largest single mobilization that we've done for any single natural

disaster." The organization has set up operational headquarters in Baton Rouge.

--The Environmental Protection Agency dispatched emergency crews to Louisiana and Texas because of concern about oil and chemical spills.

--The Coast Guard closed ports and waterways along the Gulf Coast and positioned craft around the area to conduct post-hurricane search and rescue operations.

--The Agriculture Department said its Food and Nutrition Service would provide meals and other commodities, such as infant formula, distilled water for babies and emergency food stamps.

--The Defense Department dispatched emergency coordinators to Alabama, Florida, Louisiana and Mississippi to provide communications equipment, search and rescue operations, medical teams and other emergency assistance.

--The Health and Human Services Department sent 38 doctors and nurses to Jackson, Mississippi, to be used where needed, and 30 pallets of medical supplies to the region, including first aid materials, sterile gloves and oxygen tanks.

Some six-thousand National Guard personnel from Louisiana and Mississippi who would otherwise be available to help deal with the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina are in Iraq.

Even so, Pentagon spokesman Lawrence Di Rita said the states have adequate National Guard units to handle the hurricane needs. He said about six-thousand-500 National Guard troops were available in Louisiana, about seven-thousand in Mississippi, nearly ten-thousand in Alabama and about eight-thousand-200 in Florida.

1:26 P.M. - Officials at LSU and local hospitals say they are triaging thousands of people being brought from

outside the Baton Rouge area for medical care. The people are being bused in.

1:08 P.M. - "I'm very hopeful, with the devastation we've had, that the number (of deaths) will be much more reasonable than people think. There are not thousands of people floating around." -- **Terry Ebbert, New Orleans' homeland security chief.**

1:05 P.M. - (AP) -- With much of the city emptied by Hurricane Katrina, some opportunists took advantage of the situation by looting stores.

At a Walgreen's drug store in the French Quarter, people were running out with grocery baskets and coolers full of soft drinks, chips and diapers. When police finally showed up, a young boy stood in the door screaming, "86! 86!" -- the radio code for police -- and the crowd scattered.

Around the corner on Canal Street, the main thoroughfare in the central business district, people sloshed headlong through hip-deep water as looters ripped open the steel gates on the front of several clothing and jewelry stores. One man, who had about 10 pairs of jeans draped over his left arm, was asked if he was salvaging things from his store. "No," the man shouted, "that's EVERYBODY'S store."

12:55 P.M. - N.O. Mayor Ray Nagin says rescue operations with boats are continuing.

12:50 P.M. - St. John Parish hospital closed at this time. Water working but must be boiled. Parish president Nickie Monica asks residents who have evacuated to stay out. Good News, no major structural damage. Monica says schools and offices closed until further notice. He asks that St. John Parish be made a priority to be used as a staging area for other parishes that suffered worse fates. **911 not working...EMERGENCIES IN ST. JOHN PARISH...1-985-652-6338, 1-985-536-2112...west bank 1-985-497-3321.**

12:45 P.M. - Reports of looting in downtown New Orleans of drugstores. Reports people rushing out with

grocery carts of food, soft drinks and diapers. Ripped open steel gates at some Canal Street stores taking clothing.

12:44 P.M. - (AP) The Louisiana Offshore Oil Port did NOT suffer major damage as a result of Hurricane Katrina. And a port official says the flow of oil could resume within "a matter of hours" once its power supply is restored.

12:41 P.M. - Rescue efforts a priority. Clearing infrastructure to hospitals. Most streets blocked by pine trees. Slidell - A Hampton Inn on Old Spanish Trail with 20 feet. Fifteen feet of water downtown. One Slidell hospital had to be evacuated, the others are at maximum capacity.

11:58 A.M. - Homeland security chief optimistic that 3,000 pound sandbags can plug 200 foot levee break at 17th Street Canal.

11:55 A.M. - Super Wal-Mart in Kenner open for supplies.

11:54 A.M. - Kenner mayor asking for more National Guard. Asks anyone with the guard to call 468-7200.

11:53 A.M. - Two dead in Slidell in rising waters after attempting to get back to their homes. The victims had initially evacuated.

11:52 A.M. - Entergy reports 1.1 million outages in Mississippi and Louisiana.

11:50 A.M. - JP Sheriff asking anyone with a boat to bring it to Sam's Parking lot on Airline and Cleary to help with evacuations.

11:46 A.M. - (AP) The president asked individual Americans to get involved with the relief effort, suggesting anyone who wishes to help could call **1-800-**

HELPNOW, log on to the Red Cross Web site or get in touch with the Salvation Army.

11:44 A.M. - LSU becoming a major staging area for injured and evacuees. Campus allowing families of students to house with them. Making facilities available as "community responsibility" according to Chancellor Sean O'Keefe.

11:43 A.M. - Councilman Byron Lee of Jefferson Parish, "This is not life as it used to be. It's like a war zone."

11:39 A.M. (AP) - National Guardsmen brought in people from outlying areas to the Superdome in the backs of big 2 1/2-ton Army trucks. Louisiana's wildlife enforcement department also brought people in on the backs of their pickups. Some were wet, some were in wheelchairs, some were holding babies and nothing else.

11:35 A.M. - (AP) Downtown streets that were relatively clear in the hours after the storm were filled with 1 to 1 1/2 feet of water Tuesday morning. Water was knee-deep around the Superdome. Canal Street was literally a canal. Water lapped at the edge of the French Quarter. Clumps of red ants floated in the gasoline-fouled waters downtown.

11:28 A.M. - JP Councilman Chris Roberts: Three rescued from Grand Isle, according to Grand Isle Mayor.

11:26 A.M. - New Orleans Times-Picayune newspaper evacuating offices.

11:21 A.M. (AP) - The White House says President Bush is cutting short his vacation to return to Washington to monitor the hurricane recovery efforts.

11:16 A.M. - Gretna Police Chief...some people south of Gretna Blvd. trapped in water in homes, waiting to be rescued, but believed safe. Several looters arrested, chief says about 50. Lots of debris, at least some structural damage in 95 to 98 percent of buildings.

Water is off in Gretna due to barge that was hit and dumped diesel into water supply. Plenty of homes with structural damage...a few that have collapsed. As far as police chief knows, No deaths in Gretna, two minor injuries. Chief says looting has been mainly for groceries. Law enforcement given "whatever authority they need" to prevent looting of homes.

11:15 A.M. - Hospitals with no power and rising waters are bringing patients to the Superdome.

11:13 A.M. - Plaquemines Parish...if you are found on the street...will be arrested. Marshall law in effect. 60 percent of homes flooded. 50 people rescued.

11:12 A.M. Governor Blanco, U.S. Senator Vitter - "Do Not come back Now" if you've evacuated.

11:06 A.M. Governor Blanco reports 700 people have been rescued since Monday afternoon, but that many more remain trapped.

11:01 A.M. - Break in 17th Street Canal Levee is now 200 feet wide and slowly flooding the City of New Orleans. Huge sand bags are being airlifted to try to stem the rush of water in that area.

10:53 A.M. - Latest on Northshore from St. Tammany Parish. [Click here.](#)

10:42 A.M. - Rising waters continue in N.O. due to failed pumps and breached levees at the 17th Street Canal and the Ninth Ward. Rising waters caused one hospital to evacuate patients to the Louisiana Superdome.

10:39 A.M. - Gretna officials say standing water is preventing them from getting to some people trapped in their homes. - Bill Capo.

10:37 A.M. GULFPORT, Miss. (AP) -- Rescuers in boats and helicopters searched for survivors of

Hurricane Katrina and brought victims, wet and bedraggled, to shelters Tuesday as the extent of the damage across the Gulf Coast became ever clearer. The governor said the death toll in one Mississippi county alone could be as high as 80.

10:35 A.M. Governor Blanco - "Worse than our worst fears."

10:33 A.M. People trapped near Jefferson Parish and Orleans are being asked to get a boat and get to the Sam's Club parking lot on Earhart and Airline to meet the National Guard who will take you to the Superdome.

10:15 A.M. A spokeswoman describes Jefferson Parish as a "very dangerous" place. Jackie Bauer says there's gas leaks everywhere, water needs to be boiled, there's no commercial power, no pumping stations and the water's toxic.

And there's still some deep water in some neighborhoods. Bauer says there are other dangers -- snakes in the water, other vermin, loose dogs and cats everywhere. She says -- quoting now -- "We kind of have to fight for survival with them." - Associated Press

10 A.M. WWL-TV crew bugged out from French Quarter studios to transmitter site in Gretna. Trees down and sides of buildings collapsed. Roof shingles on the street are dangerous with nails and one WWL-TV car got a flat tire on the way over. - Dennis Woltering.

9:35 A.M. Marshal Law in effect in Jefferson Parish and Plaquemines Parish. 60 percent of homes in Plaquemines Parish under water.

9:33 A.M. Uptown fared much better than the rest of the city. - Andy Jacobs, Uptown caller.

8:39 A.M. WWL-TV studios are being evacuated as rising water is coming into the station. The French Quarter is taking on water and water is expected to rise in the city for the next few days.

More headlines...

- [Throng seek to escape New Orleans](#)
- [Nagin declares Martial Law to crack down on looters](#)
- [Major developments in Hurricane Katrina's aftermath](#)
- [Belo Corp. establishes WWL-TV employee relief fund](#)
- [Engineers struggle to find ways to 'unwater' New Orleans](#)
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