

**The NewsRoom**

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**Notice of Possible Closure of MMS Office in New Orleans on Monday, July 11, 2005, and of Contingency Plans**

NEW ORLEANS – The Minerals Management Service has announced that it may close its Gulf of Mexico Regional Office in New Orleans on Monday, July 11, 2005, because of Hurricane Dennis.

MMS Regional Director Chris Oynes noted that "this announcement that we may close the office on Monday, July 11, 2005, is a precaution to alert the public about the status of the office and provide contingency plans for release of information."

As is normal practice, MMS took steps today to activate the Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP), which opens a temporary office in Houston, Texas, when the New Orleans office is facing a potential closure. A small team is traveling to Houston today to open a temporary office should the MMS New Orleans office be shut down. This is standard practice.

All critical phone lines and select fax lines from the New Orleans Office associated with hurricane evacuation and shut-in statistics reporting will be redirected today to the Houston COOP site. Mr. Chuck Schoennagel, Deputy Regional Director, will be in charge of the COOP team. Companies who are reporting shut-in and evacuation statistics can report this information as directed in NTL No. 2005-G06 to the normal phone/fax number (it will be redirected). Should contact be necessary with the temporary Houston office, they can be reached at (281) 987-6876 and 6865. .

MMS will continue its normal daily release of shut-in and evacuation statistics on Monday, July 11, regardless of which office is open.

MMS, part of the U.S. Department of the Interior, oversees 1.76 billion acres of the Outer Continental Shelf, managing offshore energy and minerals while protecting the human, marine, and coastal environments through advanced science and technology research. The OCS provides 30 percent of oil and 21 percent of natural gas produced domestically, and sand used for coastal restoration. MMS collects, accounts for, and disburses mineral revenues from Federal and American Indian lands, with Fiscal Year 2004 disbursements of approximately \$8 billion and more than \$143 billion since 1982. The Land and Water Conservation Fund, which pays for cooperative conservation, grants to states, and Federal land acquisition, gets nearly \$1 billion a year.

**Relevant Web Sites:**

[BOEM Main Website](#)

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[MMS: Securing Ocean Energy & Economic Value for America](#)  
U.S. Department of the Interior

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Top of Page ▲

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