



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Contact:** Office of Communications  
**Phone:** (601) 359-5701, 359-5655

**E-mail:** [MDOCOfficeofCommunications@mdoc.state.ms.us](mailto:MDOCOfficeofCommunications@mdoc.state.ms.us)

### MDOC Commissioner Cain update on prison facilities in winter storm

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From MDOC Commissioner Burl Cain:

“Fortunately, we began repairing and upgrading our prison facilities when I arrived in May of 2020. As a consequence, we had made many replacements and repairs in plant and equipment and were prepared to keep 17,000 inmates comfortable for winter and summer.

“When this Artic freeze dropped below freezing into single digits in north Mississippi this week, one boiler at Mississippi State Penitentiary at Parchman did malfunction in Unit 29 but we immediately issued blankets and thermal underwear as repairs were being made. About 20 inmates were moved to another wing while repairs were being made.

“At Marshall County Correctional near Memphis, a gas line froze which shut down a kitchen. Corrections staff grilled hot dogs, hamburgers and sausages for inmates which were served with cold cuts, chips, and fruit.

“An old water line broke at CMCF but has been repaired. Dining schedules are back on track.

“We lost power at only one unit of Parchman, for two hours, but we experienced no outages at all other facilities because our units are backed up with separate generators which are maintained and tested by outside mechanical engineers. They followed a stringent new checklist in anticipation of the winter storm that included:

- Emergency Generators
- Emergency Fuel
- Emergency Vehicles
- Emergency Equipment (Flashlights, batteries, radios, warehouse supplies etc.)
- Boilers
- Emergency Lighting
- Emergency water and food supply.

“MDOC maintenance crews and staff deserve our thanks because they’ve been working around the clock to keep everybody safe and warm.

“While we have been challenged in getting officers and staff safely to work, MDOC professionals fill the gaps as needed to maintain safety, comfort and nutrition for inmates and officers. Our superintendents, wardens and officers went above and beyond the call of duty by driving all-wheel-drive vehicles to bring officers to work over icy roads with no mishaps.

“I have noticed a wonderful new enthusiasm by MDOC employees since we have begun an aggressive recruiting campaign to re-fill hundreds of positions that were left vacant for years. Thanks to Governor Reeves, the Mississippi Corrections Committee, Lt. Gov. Hosemann, and the legislature, we have increased salaries and benefits for officers closer to the southern average. With this, we are optimistic we will fill 700 Corrections positions before summer starts.”

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