

World Environment News

Thunderstorms pound U.S. South after days of rain

Date: *15-Mar-16*
Country: USA
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A band of storms are seen over Texas and Louisiana in this image taken by the NASA Suomi NPP satellite's VIIRS instrument around 1:50 pm ET (18:50 GMT) March 10, 2016.
Photo: NASA/Handout via Reuters

A line of severe thunderstorms hit Louisiana on Saturday, adding more rain to flooded rivers across the lower Mississippi Valley after days of downpours, meteorologists said.

Drenching rains this week have killed three people in Louisiana and one in Oklahoma. Two fishermen remain missing in Mississippi, state emergency management officials said.

Mike Steele, a spokesman for the Louisiana emergency office, said areas of the state had received more than 2 feet (60 cm) of rain during the deluge. Early figures showed 2,500 homes damaged across the state, and 1,100 people had been rescued from the high water in one parish, Tangipahoa, alone, he said.

"We could be seeing more problems as rivers start to crest," he said.

The National Weather Service issued severe thunderstorm warnings for seven parishes in the northern part of Louisiana, with winds gusting to 60 miles per hour (97 kph).

It also extended flash flood warnings in northwestern Louisiana, and said more rain was likely from Texas to Mississippi.

A cold front sweeping into the area from the Rocky Mountains on Sunday probably will spawn more severe weather, complicating recovery efforts, the weather service said.

Scores of roads and bridges were closed throughout the region. In Mississippi, almost 400 homes suffered damage from the rainfall and flooding, the state emergency agency said.

(Editing by Sandra Maler)

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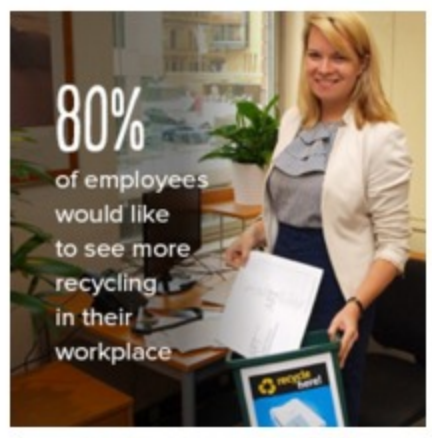
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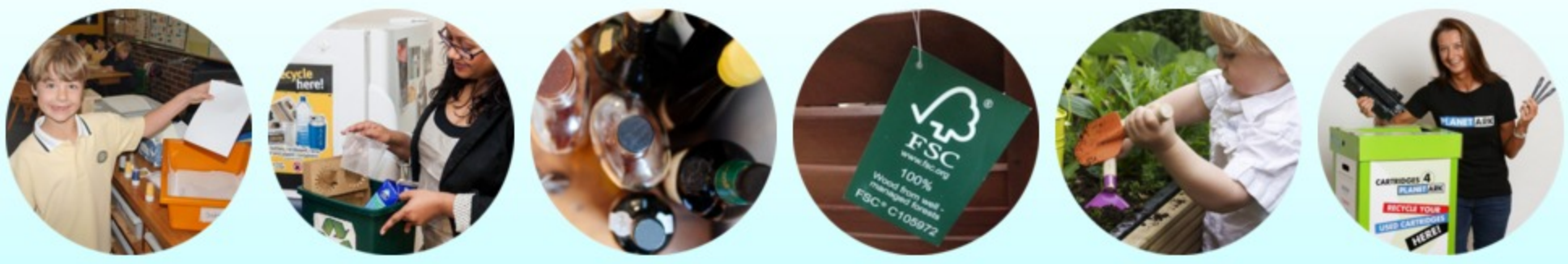
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