



DISEASE, FIRE THREATEN CITY

Toxic floodwaters latest danger; remaining residents told to leave



STAFF PHOTO BY TED JACKSON

NEW ORLEANS: Clinging to his puppy, this resident of a burning home on Columbia Street in New Orleans walks away as smoke and water fill the air on Tuesday. See story, A-9.

St. Bernard, N.O. schools to close for rest of year

La. schools chief offers grim outlook

Laura Maggi
Staff Writer

BATON ROUGE -- Students likely will not be able to attend public school in Orleans or St. Bernard parishes for the rest of the school year, state schools Superintendent Cecil Picard said Tuesday.

Other school districts, such as those in Jefferson, Plaquemines, St. Charles and St. Tammany parishes and the city of Bogalusa, can be up and running in either weeks or months, he said at a briefing at the state Office of Emergency Preparedness.

About 135,000 public school students in four parishes - Orleans, Jefferson, St. Bernard and Plaquemines - were displaced by Hurricane Katrina, along with 52,000 private and parochial school students, according to the state Department of Education. These students will be required to attend school, for at

Nagin says water receding

By Bruce Nolan
Staff writer

Mayor Ray Nagin on Tuesday ordered all remaining New Orleans residents out of the city to escape sporadic fires and the growing threat of disease from standing water contaminated by toxic chemicals and rotting corpses.

Meanwhile, an Army Corps of Engineers official said it could take 80 days to pump out the billions of gallons of water that Hurricane Katrina poured into the New Orleans area Aug. 29.

Low-lying Chalmette might be the last to emerge, while eastern New Orleans will take about 24 days to dry out, said the corps' Dan Kitchens at the Louisiana emergency operations center in Baton Rouge.

The water level in most parts of Orleans Parish has receded 6 inches to a foot, Nagin said after a helicopter fly-over Tuesday morning. That means that some submerged areas, such as the lakefront campus of the University of New Orleans, have drained substantially, he said.

The corps said two or three of the city's 148 drainage pumps were online, supplemented by dozens of smaller pumps brought into the city.

According to CNN.com, Nagin issued a statement in which he told all law enforcement officers "to compel the evacuation of all persons ... regardless of whether such persons are on private property or do not desire to leave." The report said the order did not apply to Algiers.



STAFF PHOTO BY ELLIS LUCIA

17TH STREET CANAL: Water is pumped into the 17th Street Canal from neighborhoods on the Orleans Parish side of the levee breach on Tuesday. Officials closed the break in the levee on Monday.

See SCHOOLS, page A-5

See KATRINA, page A-4