



# The Times-Picayune

50 CENTS 169th year No. 252

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2005

HURRICANE EDITION

## Storms shutter all Gulf oil output

*One third of U.S. drilling halted*

**By Mary Judice**  
Business writer

Hurricanes Rita and Katrina have damaged more offshore drilling rigs than any

storm in recent times, and one report Wednesday said all oil production in the Gulf of Mexico has temporarily ceased.

The Minerals Management Service said Wednesday that its survey indicated that 100 percent of oil production in the Gulf is shut down as well as more than 80 percent of natural gas production.

The Gulf supplies 29 percent of the nation's oil and 21 percent of the gas.

Rita, which came ashore Saturday morning, hit the western Gulf. Hurricane Katrina, which came ashore Aug. 29, struck the central Gulf. Both areas are rich with offshore production platforms and drilling rigs.

"We've never experienced

the amount of damage to the rig fleet we've experienced from these two storms," said Tom Marsh, U.S. editor of the energy information firm, ODS-Petrodata.

Damage is not the only reason that production has stopped, or what the industry calls shut in.

Gary Strasburg, spokesman for the MMS, which is

an agency of the U.S. Interior Department, said some production has stopped because of Federal Aviation Administration restrictions on overflights, which oil producers need to do to assess damage before sending crews out. Also, the oil industry is still attempting to locate its

See **OIL**, A-15

## Katrina tragedy becomes personal

*32 bodies identified, but many may stay unknown*

**By Ed Anderson**  
Capital bureau

BATON ROUGE — The names of the first of Louisiana's Hurricane Katrina victims to be identified were released Wednesday, but scores of victims may never be identified, the chief medical officer in charge of the task said.

The 32 were the first of the 896 victims recovered so far to be identified by the state.

The process has been difficult because many of the bodies underwent prolonged exposure to the elements, said Dr. Louis Cataldie, former East Baton Rouge Parish coroner who is now the chief medical officer charged with identifying the dead.

"Each person is a worst-case scenario," Cataldie said. "There is nothing worse than somebody dying like this."

Crews are still working their way through New Orleans' Lower 9th Ward as well as St. Bernard and Plaquemines parishes to retrieve bodies. Cataldie refused to speculate on how many more bodies would be found.

Most of the dead at a makeshift morgue in St. Gabriel so far have been recovered from Orleans and St. Bernard parishes, he said.

Autopsies have been conducted on 100 of the bodies. The causes of death for most of the victims has been drowning or from pre-existing conditions, such as heart problems, worsened by the stress of the evacuation from the storm, or from loss of power for ventilators or other life-sustaining devices, said Department of Health and Hospitals spokesman Bob Johannessen, whose agency is working with Cataldie.

About six or seven of the deaths were homicides that occurred after Hurricane Katrina, mostly in the New Orleans area, though none occurred at the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center or the Superdome, Cataldie said. Ten people died at the Dome and another four at

See **DEATHS**, A-15

## Nagin forced Compass out

*Police chief fired after heated confrontation*

**By Trymaine D. Lee**  
And **Walt Philbin**  
Staff writers

After announcing his retirement Tuesday, New Orleans Police Superintendent Eddie Compass told several high-ranking officers that he had been forced out by Mayor Ray Nagin, the officers said Wednesday.

They said Compass told them the decision came on the heels of a heated confrontation with the mayor. The officers spoke only on condition that they not be named.

Reached Wednesday by e-mail, Nagin said that those accounts were "inaccurate."

Compass could not be reached for comment.

At a hastily called news conference Tuesday with Nagin in attendance, Compass announced that he was retiring. When asked by a reporter whether Compass was being forced out, Nagin said no.

But after the announcement, Compass returned to a cruise ship where he and other displaced officers had been living, where they say he told them he had been forced to resign.

"He was going around telling officers, including myself, it wasn't his doing, that he would've never quit," said a high-ranking officer who asked not to be named. "He had tears in his eyes. He didn't want to go."

Another officer said Compass told him, "You work at the pleasure of the mayor. This was not my decision."

Nagin later named Assistant Superintendent Warren Riley as acting superintendent.

Officers said Compass told them that he and Nagin had an angry confrontation Tuesday morning, hours before Compass announced his retirement, which he said would begin after a transition period of up to 45 days.

Compass has come under increasing fire because of the Police Department's response

See **COMPASS**, A-14

## Mayor again puts out welcome mat



STAFF PHOTO BY JOHN MCCUSKER

**A WORLD OF HURT:** Laura Dixon Nelson, surveying her mold-filled living room on Warrington Drive in Gentilly on Wednesday, is among thousands conducting salvage operations. Beyond the obvious health hazards, such as mold, there are others less evident, such as eating from an uninspected food vendor. See **story, Metro**

### GREEN LIGHT TO RETURN

In ZIP codes 70112, 70113, 70114, 70115, 70116, 70118, 70130 and 70131, here is a timetable for returning:

**TODAY**  
Businesses in those ZIP codes will have full access.

**FRIDAY**  
Residents in those ZIP codes can return home.

**By Robert Travis Scott**  
Capital bureau

BATON ROUGE — New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin announced a three-stage re-entry plan for city residents and businesses Wednesday, saying the West Bank and pockets of the east bank are safe for return but also cautioning citizens about limited infrastructure and potential health risks.

Re-entry begins today, with businesses receiving full access to their properties in the approved ZIP codes. The second phase will be Friday, when residents in those same codes will be allowed to return permanently.

The approved ZIP codes are 70112, 70113, 70114, 70115, 70116, 70118, 70130

and 70131. Security checkpoints will be repositioned to allow entry.

"New Orleans is back open," Nagin told a meeting of state lawmakers, parish council members and residents at the state Capitol on Wednesday afternoon. "If you want to stay, you're free to stay" in those designated areas as of Friday, Nagin said.

The final phase will come Oct. 5, when residents in all other areas of the city, except the Lower 9th Ward, will be allowed to visit their properties, though they won't be allowed to stay. The Lower 9th Ward will remain closed until further notice because it is flooded.

"This is strictly look and leave" in the

See **RETURN**, A-19



STAFF PHOTO BY MICHAEL DeMOCKER

In the Rosen House on Tulane University's campus, workers toiled to secure the building. The campus is preparing to house students for the spring semester, which begins Jan. 17.

## Tulane prepares to open its doors again in January

*Some students may get tuition-free term*

**By Steve Ritea**  
Staff writer

Tulane University, the region's largest academic institution and one of its biggest employers, on Wednesday announced that classes will resume Jan. 17 and an extra tuition-free semester will be

offered in May and June for students who need to catch up.

University President Scott Cowen, who will return to campus today for the first time since the week Hurricane Katrina hit, said the university anticipates at least 90 percent of students will return for the spring semester.

Although it is unclear how many of the schools' 13,000 students are taking classes at other universities, getting most of those students to return is essential to

See **TULANE**, A-16

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