

**The NewsRoom**

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**MMS Regional Office to Stay in New Orleans**

*Sustaining Commitment to Offshore Energy Development*

**NEW ORLEANS** – The Minerals Management Service (MMS) announced today it is extending its commitment to the Gulf Coast region. The General Services Administration has signed a 15-year lease to keep the MMS Gulf of Mexico Regional Office in the New Orleans area.

“This office is responsible for the day-to-day oversight of energy development in the Federal waters of the Gulf of Mexico. This lease extension demonstrates our commitment to our employees in the New Orleans area and once again underscores the importance of the Gulf of Mexico to the energy security and reliability to our Nation,” said the agency’s director Randall Luthi.

The building houses more than 600 MMS employees and contractors. It sustained extensive damage during Hurricane Katrina, reopened in October of 2005, and resumed full operations in early 2006. It sustained only minor damage during Hurricane Gustav. The new lease will include additional updates to the building.

The lease terms include improved access to the public information and adjudication offices with a new public elevator; a state of the art visualization room with 3-D capabilities for MMS geoscientists and engineers to interpret data; complete renovations of five of the six floors; and the restructuring of the first floor lobby to provide greater security.

The MMS Gulf of Mexico Regional Office has been located in the New Orleans metropolitan area since the agency was created in 1982, and has been housed at the Elmwood Towers building since 1986.

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