

# How damage from Helene could affect high school playoff schedule

October 3, 2024 | Statesville Record & Landmark (NC) Author: LANGSTON WERTZ JR. The Charlotte Observer | Section: Mapping | 537 Words OpenURL Link

Eight years ago, the N.C. High School Athletic Association pushed back the start of its football playoffs due to Hurricane Matthew.

NCHSAA commissioner Que Tucker said that could be a possibility again this year after the devastation brought to the western part of the state by Hurricane Helene. Tucker said any decisions about the playoffs would come from the NCHSAA Board of Directors, which she expects will meet via Zoom sometime later this week.

"With the devastation they have had," Tucker said Monday. "I'm not sure one week would do it. But that's a decision that has to be made by our board members. As a staff we want to huddle up and look at what we have found and see what we can come up with to present to the board, but we want to make sure our board members (from the regions most affected) can be on the Zoom with us because they have boots-on-the-ground knowledge, and we need to get their perspective."

Tucker said in her talks with coaches and athletic officials in the mountains that the damage is excessive and that schools in all four of the NCHSAA's classes have been affected.

So the association will not be able to delay one or two classifications in the playoffs, she said.

Tucker also doesn't expect that many football games, or any sports, will be played in that region this week. She noted she saw a photograph of the football field at Morganton's Freedom High School showing it almost completely submerged.

"Even if we thought one school could play, well, who would they be playing?" Tucker asked. "How can they get there? That's the crazy part. We talked to a coach at Mountain Heritage and he had been out with a chainsaw trying to help. He stopped long enough and found a spot with cell service and said it may be two months before they can get back to school; that they are using the school building to house the workers and everybody." The NCHSAA playoffs are scheduled to begin in about two weeks, with girl tennis (Oct. 14), volleyball (Oct. 19), girls' golf (Oct. 21) and cross-country (Oct. 26) up first.

Football playoffs are scheduled to begin Nov. 8.

"Until we can get a true assessment to when schools can return to play, and just be able to open up school, we can't make decisions at this point," Tucker said.

"But I do know our board will be as far as equitable as when they were dealing with situations (brought on by past weather events) in eastern North Carolina."

Tucker said she is worried about how to get the playoffs going, knowing they are important so many schools and athletes and families. But seeing the images of the damage done, she said, is heartbreaking.

"It's a lot to think about," Tucker said. "Some people don't have drinking water. But you have to have hope, and hope brings about renewed excitement to push through. We know when we get to the other side, we'll play again, and we don't want to act like we don't have hope. But we have to be patient and try to keep it all in perspective as we try to do things that are in the best interest of everyone."

# • Citation (aglc Style)

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# Hurricane Helene flooding left Marion restaurant caked in mud. "We're just at a loss."

October 3, 2024 | Statesville Record & Landmark (NC) Author: Chrissy Murphy cmurphy@morganton.com| Section: News| 789 Words OpenURL Link

J. Hartman's restaurant on U.S. Highway 70 in Marion closed up shop Thursday, Sept. 26, after emergency management officials came by the restaurant urging people to evacuate.

With Hurricane Helene headed toward western North Carolina, heavy wind, rain and flooding were in store. Owners Jennifer and Jon Hartman were at home on the lake trying to tie off their dock to keep it from floating away if flood waters rose too high.

"We had no idea," Jennifer said. "Just like anybody else, we didn't know the water was going to come up that high, and I felt like we were pretty safe."

The couple didn't see the restaurant again until photos started popping up on social media of flood damage.

"Someone sent me a picture of the aerial view of the restaurant. ... I was just like, 'Oh my gosh,'" Jennifer said. "I came in here the next morning. At that point, one of my daughters and my in-laws were here, and they were standing on the porch and I could just see the mud. ... My mother-in-law said, she said, 'Prepare yourself ... because it's bad.' I walked in and it was just a disaster ... I was absolutely devastated."

She said mud was covering the floor, booth seats and chairs were strewn around the restaurant.

"This restaurant's ran by myself, my husband, my two daughters, and we've got 60 staff members here," Jennifer said. "It's our livelihood, but it's the 60 staff members' livelihoods. That's been one of my biggest concerns, is how quickly can we reopen to get them back to work."

She said they've hit roadblocks ever since the storm hit.

"We just keep getting hit with more and more bad news," Jennifer said. "Insurance isn't going to cover any of the property damage. The building owner, their insurance isn't going to cover any of the parking lot cleanup. They're not going to cover any of the property damage inside. We're just at a loss."

The restaurant's next steps are unclear. She said they had to throw away about \$30,000 worth of food, filling up two dumpsters, and she doesn't know where to begin with the cleaning process for everything in the building after the water came in and contaminated everything.

"People are worried about their livelihoods," Jennifer said. "We've got an amazing staff and I don't want them to feel lost or worried. Everybody's got so much loss and worry as it is. Them coming back to work is one of our biggest priorities, and I don't know how to do it."

Her mom, Toni Hodge, came up from Albermarle to help with storm cleanup. Hodge said she was worried about small businesses like J. Hartman's after the storm. She said she felt like big corporations would be able to recover, but small businesses may struggle with little help from insurance and limited resources.

"You have to weigh so many options," Hodge said. "I think it can be done. I just think it's gonna be a long time."

While things seem bleak, employees and other community volunteers have been coming in to help clean up since Hurricane Helene hit Friday. By Tuesday afternoon, the floors were clear of any mud and most of the store's furnishings had been moved outside to be rinsed off.

"It's incredibly humbling," Jennifer said. "I don't know how else to describe it."

Pepper Strode, a manager at J. Hartman's, and Angeles Amable, a cook, were two of the employees who were helping with the cleanup at the restaurant Tuesday.

"It's how I pay my bills and I love this family," Strode said. "They're some of the best people I've ever worked for and I want to see this restaurant get back up and running."

Both cried when they saw the restaurant.

"My second home is here," Amable said.

Jennifer's sister, Laura Stotts, posted ways to donate on her Instagram account @diaryof\_abandonment. By Tuesday afternoon, Stotts said about \$1,000 had been donated to the restaurant and another \$1,000 had been pledged. Some of the donations came from people who have never met the Hartmans or visited the restaurant.

"There's a whole lot of good people out there," Jennifer said.

She said in the first few days after the storm she felt numb, but seeing all the volunteers coming to help clean up changed that.

"I've been very emotional today. ... The first couple days I was completely numb, no emotion whatsoever, just like a zombie," Jennifer said. "And then the last few days, I can't stop crying."

Brandy Pittman originally headed to Grace Community Church to volunteer, but when the church had enough volunteers for the day, she pivoted to J. Hartman's. She made a call to Nebo Crossing Academy Administrator Dave Likins to get more volunteers on the way for cleanup.

"They're our people," Pittman said. "You don't leave your people hanging."

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# Helping hands: Iredell pilots stepping forward to deliver hurricane relief

October 3, 2024 | Statesville Record & Landmark (NC) Author: Donna Swicegood| Section: Local | 805 Words OpenURL Link

Just a couple of days after heavy rains from Hurricane Helene left western North Carolina residents stranded, with no way to access food or clean water, Iredell residents began looking for ways to help.

Teams of firefighters from Mooresville and Statesville and 13 officers from the Statesville Police Department all headed to various areas in the western part of the state to lend a hand.

And others wanted to do something, anything to get needed supplies to those affected by the devastating flooding.

The problem was many roads and bridges were damaged to the point they were unpassable. Getting the donations to those in need would have to be done by air.

That's when several local pilots volunteered their planes and time to take food, cleaning and hygiene supplies and bottles of water to be distributed by local officials to residents in a number of western North Carolina areas.

Dr. Andrew Gross, a physician at Lake Norman Regional Medical Center, was one of those pilots who took part in delivering those supplies.

Gross said he saw information on social media about efforts to get supplies to the area, and on Sunday, he walked into the Statesville Regional Airport to volunteer his Cessna and his time. "I asked what I could do," he said.

Since the news of the devastation in the North Carolina mountains began reaching the area, social media posts asked for folks to drop off donations at the airport, and pilots also began offering up their services to get those supplies where they needed to go.

Gross is just one of hundreds of local people wanting to do their part — either by donating those supplies or flying them to the mountains.

Gross said he flew to Ashe County and that he chose that location because the airport was deemed safe and he had a clear weather window to make the flight.

He said he didn't get a chance to see the destruction in that area. He landed, unloaded the donations and came back to Statesville in a short span of time.

The airport is continuing to accept donations for hurricane relief. The four fire stations in Statesville will also accept donations from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily and the airport is taking donations until 4 p.m. daily. The four fire stations are located as follows: Station 1, 822 Fifth St.; Station 2, 110 Security Drive; Station 3, 779 Eastside Drive; and Station 4, 115 Martin Lane.

Items being accepted are sports drinks (powdered packets), hydration packs (powder form), baby wipes, diapers for children and adults, baby formula, bug spray, sunscreen, plastic utensils, manual can openers, trash bags (13 gallon or contractor bags), nonperishable foods, cleaning supplies, plastic sheeting/tarps, toothbrushes, toothpaste, toiletries/sanitation items, pet food (dog and cat), hand sanitizer, sanitizer wipes, feminine hygiene products, heavy duty work gloves, unopened packs of socks (all sizes).

Mooresville Fire-Rescue is teaming up with Mooresville Professional Firefighters IAFF 4485 and the Downtown Mooresville Commission to collect donations for those devastated by Hurricane Helene. The groups will collect

donations Saturday from 2-8:30 p.m. at 128 N. Broad St. There will be a donation trailer set up for people to drop off items.

Items being accepted Saturday include working gloves, trash bags, toilet paper, wipes, infant formula, cases of water, bottles, diapers and baby wipes, hygiene products, feminine supplies, blankets and pillows, towels, flashlights and batteries, first aid supplies and non-prescription medication.

Purple Heart Homes will be serving as a supply drop point for employees, partners, and community members who would like to contribute to Hurricane Helene relief efforts.

Community members may make drop offs at 755 Washington Ave. in Statesville during regular business hours (Monday-Thursday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.) through Oct. 10. Follow the directional signs to the loading dock upon arrival. Contact Terry Joyner at 704-500-5346 if you need to coordinate after hours drop offs.

PHH will also be collecting donations from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday at Southern Distilling, 211 Jennings Road, during the annual Take That Hill cycling event.

The following items, which have been identified as most needed, are being accepted: powdered sports and hydration drink mix, baby wipes, diapers (children and adults) baby formula, bug spray, sunscreen, plastic utensils, manual can openers, trash bags (13 gallon or contractor bags), nonperishable foods, cleaning supplies, plastic sheeting/tarps, toothbrushes and toothpaste, toiletries/sanitation items, hand sanitizer/sanitizer wipes, feminine hygiene products, heavy duty work gloves, unopened packs of socks and bottled water.

Please do not bring used clothing, hazmat or flammable items, most chemicals, including bleach or fuel.

Local animal rescue groups are also joining the effort.

Piedmont Animal Rescue and Rescue Ranch are partnering to fly supplies to the mountains. Donations can be dropped off at either PAR, 228 E. Waterlynn Road, Mooresville, and Rescue Ranch, 1424 Turnersburg Highway, Statesville.

Items being sought include bottled drinking water (gallon jugs or bottles), any pet supplies, any dry dog or cat food and Breeder's Edge formula.

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# Appalachian State's Hickory, Boone campuses not holding classes until after Oct.15

October 3, 2024 | Statesville Record & Landmark (NC) Author: Billy Chapman wchapman@hickoryrecord.com| Section: News| 274 Words OpenURL Link

Students attending Appalachian State's Hickory campus will not meet for classes until at least Oct. 16, according to a release from the university.

The university's campus in Boone was heavily impacted by Hurricane Helene, which was a tropical storm when it hit North Carolina on Sept. 27. Flooding, mudslides and downed trees damaged infrastructure and buildings throughout Boone and Watauga County.

A fall break for the university is also scheduled for Oct. 14 and 15.

Classes in Boone are also canceled until at least Oct. 16, the release said.

Appalachian State Interim Chancellor Heather Norris said during a press conference Tuesday the university's Boone campus briefly lost power and internet service.

She said many campus buildings sustained water damage, but residence halls remained structurally sound.

Norris said widespread flooding and transportation issues were affecting faculty and staff.

"We've been focused on mitigating the effects of Hurricane Helene and keeping our community safe," Norris said during the press conference.

During the press conference, Watauga County Director of Emergency Management Will Holt said the county's 911 system received 2,000 calls for assistance the first day of the storm. He said the county normally receives 3,000 calls in a month.

Holt said dozens were sheltered at Appalachian State's Holmes Convocation Center.

"Everyone, please stay out of Watauga County unless you are called upon," Holt said at the press conference.

Community colleges

Catawba Valley Community College also canceled classes and closed the campus this week. The college said it would provide information about classes during the week of Oct. 7 by late afternoon Oct. 4.

Western Piedmont Community College in Morganton was also closed this week. The college said hundreds of utility trucks are using the campus as a base.

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# 'Bigger than just football'

October 3, 2024 | Statesville Record & Landmark (NC) Author: Brian Meadows| Section: Football | 331 Words OpenURL Link

The last two seasons, Lake Norman High School's football team has played Asheville High School as part of its nonconference slate of games. As a result, a friendship among colleagues arose between Wildcats head coach Jonathan Oliphant and Cougars head coach Cort Radford.

When Hurricane Helene wreaked havoc on Asheville and all of western North Carolina, concern for Radford and the young men he leads weighed on Oliphant.

On Saturday, Oliphant reached out to Radford, and the two communicated briefly via text message.

"Praying for all you guys up there," Oliphant said. "Can't imagine what you and your kids are going through."

"Thanks, Coach," Radford said. "It's bad."

"Can't fathom it," Oliphant responded.

"Everything is destroyed," Radford said. "Don't really know what you do next but we will just take it one day at a time."

Although it's been reported that there is miraculously no damage to any of the school buildings in Asheville, the city school system is closed indefinitely. Some students and staff in Asheville and in many communities in the area are without food, water and shelter.

Mission Health is using the Asheville High School football field as a landing pad for helicopters carrying patients who need to be transferred. Helicopters full of shipments to the hospital are also landing on the field. A local church used the high school to distribute necessities Tuesday.

The devastation impacts the remainder of the season for the Cougars (2-1). In fact, the rest of their 10-game schedule now reflects the following on Maxpreps, and even those four contests against mountain schools also affected by Helene might be a stretch: Oct. 11 vs. Asheville T.C. Roberson; Oct. 18 at McDowell County; Oct. 25 vs. North Buncombe; Nov. 1 at Candler Enka.

Oliphant, whose Wildcats (4-1) defeated Asheville 34-7 on the road in 2023 and at home last month, 32-15, is sympathetic to the adversity Radford and his team face in the days and months ahead.

The coaching fraternity is special. Circumstances such as these magnify it.

Said Oliphant, it's "bigger than just football."

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October 3, 2024 | Statesville Record & Landmark (NC) Author: BRIAN MEADOWS bmeadows@statesville.com| Section: Mapping | 331 Words OpenURL Link

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# Local resources sent west to help with recovery efforts, cash donations recommended

October 3, 2024 | Stokes News, The (Walnut Cove, NC) Author: Flagg Terri| Section: News| 655 Words OpenURL Link

Stokes County folks know how to lend a hand to a neighbor in hard times, and the response to help communities devastated by Hurricane Helene has been swift.

"The state's working together — it's North Carolina," said Emergency Services Director Brandon Gentry. "We got a good organization statewide that's gonna take care of the people."

The storm and rainfall that preceded it dumped an estimated 40 trillion gallons of water on the eastern United States last week, according to an Associated Press report.

The death toll had climbed to 166 in six southeastern states as of Wednesday morning, with search and rescue efforts still underway, hundreds of roads closed and millions without power.

Historic flooding hit western North Carolina hard; at least 57 people were killed in Buncombe County alone, home to the city of Asheville.

Stokes County was spared the brunt of the apocalyptic storm.

Gentry said an estimated 2 to 3 inches fell locally. There were no reports of flooding, no injuries and no lost roads.

A downed tree damaged one home.

Gentry said that about 50 to 75 trees fell and brought power lines down, leaving a peak number of 1,700 without power.

By the morning of Sunday, Sept. 29, power had been restored to all but about 100 customers and was fully restored by that evening.

Surry County also experienced power outages and downed trees and power lines, with portions of Elkin closed on Friday due to Yadkin River flooding that blocked access to the Gwyn McNeil bridge.

The bridge was reopened Saturday morning, with Standard Street remained closed due to the flooding and businesses reporting damages.

Before the storm hit, Gentry and other local officials had identified resources that could be shared with others areas of the state.

A prime mover, a flatbed pickup truck used for moving equipment, was deployed to Mitchell County from Thursday to Saturday.

As part of the Triad HealthCare Preparedness Coalition out Mocksville, Stokes County staff delivered a shower trailer, restroom trailer, 1000 gallon water tank to downtown Asheville.

Stokes also sent 120 KW generator to Yancey County.

The Walnut Cove, Northeast Stokes, South Stokes and King fire departments all delivered fire tricks to the western part of the state, and a nurse from the Stokes County Health Department was deployed yesterday to Haywood

County to work in an emergency shelter.

Hanging Rock State Park officials said park rangers will deployed to western areas.

Gentry noted on Tuesday that the Stokes County 911 center was still answering calls for Graham County.

"There's been a lot going on since last Friday for sure," Gentry said. "We're just sitting here waiting on when the state calls us for another request, to help out wherever we need to."

Gentry noted that the prime movers were funded through Homeland Security grants and the equipment is maintained by each county, and each county generally has one or two of them.

"Everybody calls on people not affected to help out the affected areas to help move generators, shower trailers," he said. "Every county around us is doing the same thing."

Local folks mobilized just as quickly, with organizations, businesses, schools and churches stepping up to gather and distribute donations.

Gentry said the main thing folks need to realize is that rescue operations are still underway, so cash donations are preferred to supplies.

"It's great, everybody's wanting to do it," he said. "But at the same time they'd be better off with the money right now because these organizations can get what they need."

It's hard to get supplies in and to know what people actually need in specific areas.

"It's hard to get resources in and out because some of these areas are by air only."

Gentry recommended contributing to the North Carolina Disaster Relief fund at nc.gov/donate.

Those who want to volunteer can sign up with Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) at www.ncvoad.org/volunteer/. Helene work sites have not yet been established but will be posted as soon as travel is deemed safe in the area.

The links are also posted on the Stokes County EMS Facebook page.

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# The Old Paths: Before time gets away from us

October 3, 2024 | Stokes News, The (Walnut Cove, NC) Author: Leslie Bray Brewer Special for The Stokes News | Section: Columnists | 1243 Words OpenURL Link

Time has a way of getting away from us. We get busy —with life, kids, work, sports — and then realize that time indeed "got away" from us. That's an odd idiom we use, isn't it? It personifies time as an elusive Houdini who somehow eludes our grasp if we're not careful to keep an eye on him.

I guess that's why Kenny Chesney warned us in his 2007 hit song: "Trust me, friend — A hundred years goes faster than you think, so don't blink." Yet we get so busy that we keep blinking.

In preparation for a long-awaited beach sabbatical, I spent the last two weeks of September in a frenzy of planning, packing, homeschooling, housecleaning and more gerundic "-ing" things. The time was gone in a blink.

In my blinking, I — the consummate Jackson 5 fan back on the old paths — didn't even realize that Tito Jackson had died on Sept. 15. When we think about that fabulous group, we tend to focus more on Michael and Jermaine, but did you know that we owe the founding of The Jackson Five to Tito? When 10-year-old Tito was caught playing his dad's guitar, Dad Joe realized his son had talent and bought him his own guitar. The brothers' group formed around Tito's instrumental skills.

The timing of his death was sadly ironic for me because every year when my family hits the road for our fall beach trip, the first CD we play is The Jackson 5's Greatest Hits. I didn't play it this year because for the first time, I was driving to the coast without my family. When they arrive down east later this week, I plan to play "I Want You Back" so we can sing and dance and fondly remember Tito.

I had already arrived at the beach before I heard that Dame Maggie Smith had died. For those of us in NC, her death on Sept. 27 was understandably overshadowed by the horrors hurled upon our beloved state by Hurricane Helene.

Somehow Dame Maggie had seemed indestructible — almost a force of nature herself with her legendary acting career, supreme confidence, indefatigable aplomb and bitingly sharp wit. Although her storied career thrived for many decades, most of us knew her best as Downton Abbey's feisty, condescending Dowager Countess of Grantham, Violet Crawley.

Despite her oft-acid-laden tongue which uttered statements that could've withered the most well-watered oasis, "Old Lady Crawley" yet won us over with occasional glimpses of her generous heart and fair-mindedness. In fact, she was my hubster's favorite character on the award-winning British historical drama. I plan to soon rewatch the last "Downton Abbey" movie to see her final moving performance.

The day after her passing, the world lost yet another well-loved celebrity — Kris Kristofferson. Since that was my travel day to the beach, as well as the day we were hearing even more horrific stories of Helene's fury, I didn't realize one of the final "Highwaymen" was gone. With Kristofferson's death, only 91-year-old Willie Nelson remains from that old country supergroup which also included Johnny Cash and Waylon Jennings.

When I think of Kristofferson, I remember the summer I developed a huge crush on him. I had just turned 16 when the movie "Convoy" came out, with him playing the rebel trucker who used the then-popular CB radios to lead a convoy of truckers through the enemy territory of a trickster sheriff.

My whole community was hooked on CB radios at that time, so the movie piqued our interest. My CB handle was "Island Girl" (I was a big Elton John fan), and my 10-20 was often sitting in front of my Daddy's CB radio, spouting out CB lingo like "Tar Baby, you got your ears on?" or "10-4, Brer Rabbit, over and out."

Our fascination with CB radios led a bunch of us from Forest Chapel UMC to go together to see "Convoy." Sitting in that old Thruway Shopping Center theater, I didn't care that Kristofferson was 42; I just knew that I so envied the gorgeous Ali McGraw, his love interest in the movie.

But perhaps my favorite memory of Kristofferson comes from my childhood Sunday School class. My Mama was our teacher, and sometimes if the lesson ended early, she would let us play Bible-based games. Our favorite was the alphabet game — using the letters in order to name things of a specific category.

On that particular Sunday, the category was Christian songs. The first person had it easy and usually called out, "Amazing Grace." The next kid had the letter "B" and perhaps said, "Blessed Assurance." Around the room we went, with Mama giving us permission to skip the letters "Q," "X" and "Z." That meant "Y" was the final letter of the game, and of course, a tough one.

As the game wound down, we inevitably began looking around the room to see who would end up with the letter "Y," hoping it wasn't us. That summer morning, we saw that it would be a teenage boy who admittedly wasn't very good at this game, not having been raised in church as a youngster.

Before we could begin feeling sorry for him, we saw that he suddenly looked very smug. It was obvious he could hardly wait until his turn. Puzzled, we other teens began exchanging glances, wondering how in the world he had thought of a Christian song title that began with "Y" since even those of us who had banged our baby rattles on the church pews couldn't think of one.

Finally it was his turn, and he could barely sit still in his excitement. When Mama called on him, he was grinning bigger than a butcher's dog as he burst out with "Y Me, Lord."

We all just sat there in stunned silence until we realized that he meant the 1973 Kris Kristofferson hit, "Why Me, Lord." As kids often unthinkingly do, we burst out in laughter at the expense of our friend who had been so proud of his achievement to end the song game. He looked around the room in confusion, wondering what the joke was. When we told him, he was such a good sport that he cracked up laughing right along with us.

That humble guy remained my buddy throughout high school. He and I often talked about the Cincinnati Reds during their Big Red Machine years with Johnny Bench, Joe Morgan, Pete Rose and other greats. How ironic that just two days after Kristofferson passed, Pete Rose died. That one I can't even write about yet since I bawled like a baby when I heard the news.

Somehow that teenaged girl who loved the Reds blinked and is now an older middle-aged woman — a woman who for some reason seems surprised when the stars she loved in her childhood die at age 88 (Kris) or 83 (Pete) or 89 (Maggie) or even 70 (Tito). I blinked, and time got away from me.

Hearing the heartbreaking stories of those who lost so much — many of them their very lives — in the destruction of Hurricane Helene has caused me to want to reorder my life. I want to take advice from the last verse of Chesney's "Don't Blink":

"So I've been trying to slow it down

I've been trying to take it in

In this 'here today, gone tomorrow' world we're living in."

This is the heart-wrenching lesson we've learned during this heartbreaking week. Now to put feet to our good intentions — before time gets away from us.....

# • Citation (aglc Style)

Leslie Bray Brewer Special for The Stokes News, 'The Old Paths: Before time gets away from us', *Stokes News, The* (online), 3 Oct 2024 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BFA286DEAF7BE8">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BFA286DEAF7BE8</a>



# Travel to NC mountains sharply restricted

October 3, 2024 | Times-News (Burlington, NC) Author: SHARON MYERS PAXTON MEDIA GROUP| Section: Local | 264 Words OpenURL Link

Anyone who wants to bring relief supplies to the flood-ravaged communities of western North Carolina may not be allowed into the region if they don't check in with state officials before they leave, the N.C. Department of Emergency Management said.

Officials with the department's Business Operations Emergency Center say that most roads west of Hickory remain closed except to emergency vehicles and registered volunteer organizations, and people will not be allowed into the area if they haven't notified officials in advance about what they are bringing and where it is going.

"We must secure these routes for responders and critical partner assets needed for response and recovery efforts," a notice from the center said. "There is a high likelihood that your teams will be turned away at various checkpoints."

Anyone wishing to travel to the area to drop off donations can email requests to BEOC@ncdps.gov with the subject line "Logistics support." The emails should include what is being moved and why special access is needed. It should also include where you are traveling to and from, as well as the expected arrival time.

The N.C. Department of Public Safety said the most-needed donation at this time is money, which can be sent to the North Carolina Disaster Relief Fund at www.nc.gov/disaster-relief-fund-fags.

There are also many churches, businesses and other organizations that are registered Volunteer Organization Active in a Disaster that are collecting donations to be delivered. A list can be found at www.ncvoad.org/members/

Those wishing to volunteer in person can sign up with a Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster at https://www.ncvoad.org/volunteer/.

NCDPS also has a list of resources at www.ncdps.gov/our-organization/emergency-management/hurricane-helene. Copyright, 2024, Times-News (Burlington, NC), All Rights Reserved.

# • Citation (aglc Style)

SHARON MYERS PAXTON MEDIA GROUP, 'Travel to NC mountains sharply restricted', *Times-News* (online), 3 Oct 2024 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BFF6DDB0DA3DA8">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BFF6DDB0DA3DA8</a>



# Why was flooding in WNC so devastating?

October 3, 2024 | Times-News, The (Hendersonville, NC) Author: Jacob Wilt; Asheville Citizen Times | Section: News | 647 Words Page: A6 OpenURL Link

With Hurricane Helene finally out of the picture, the true extent of the devastation and loss of life in Asheville, North Carolina has only just become apparent.

More than 60 people are dead in Buncombe County. With many still missing or out of power and unable to communicate, the true death toll will remain uncertain for some time. Large swaths of Asheville, including Biltmore Village and the iconic River Arts District were submerged under nearly 25 feet of water after the French Broad River overflowed.

But why did this happen? This "100-year flood" is no expression — the flood of 1916 in Asheville crested at 21 feet, a record that has now been smashed by Helene. It's partially due to a rare weather event, some back luck, and potentially climate change.

Why was there so much rainfall in Asheville, Western N.C.?

Helene produced such a large amount of rainfall due in part to a predecessor event, small (relative to a hurricane) regions of heavy rainfall produced ahead of a hurricane. These rainfalls produce a band of deep tropical moisture which, when mixed with a hurricane, cause significant rainfall.

Those predecessor rainfalls hit Western North Carolina on Wednesday and Thursday. According to USA TODAY, 10 inches of rain fell on Asheville, 8 inches on Tryon and 6 inches in Bristol-Johnson, Tennessee before Helene even reached the area.

Did climate change play a part

in North Carolina flooding?

Climate change may be partially to blame, as well. A recent study by Princeton University researchers found more hurricanes are undergoing rapid intensification, with sustained wind speeds increasing at least 35 mph within a day and producing "significantly higher rainfall hazard levels." In North America, this occurs when a hurricane soaks up moisture from the Gulf of Mexico.

Princeton University researchers predict such events will increase 10%-30% for each degree of global temperature increase.

"The changing climate will likely lead to more rapidly intensified cyclones and greater flooding potential in the coming years," the study states.

Is this an example of

the Fujiwhara effect?

While it appeared early in Helene's life that mass amounts of rainfall would be created via the Fujiwhara effect, that is not how it turned out.

The phenomenon known as the Fujiwhara effect occurs when two storms with low pressure interact with and are

pulled toward each other, causing them to rotate around a central point and sometimes combine. This often produces heavy rainfall.

KATV meteorologist James Bryant posted on X predictions of what would have happened to Helene if the Fujiwara effect occurred, showing the two storms combining into one over Arkansas.

In reality, Helene's catastrophic rainfall came when it combined with the previously mentioned low pressure band of moisture to the north.

Did any dams near

Asheville burst?

Despite rumors that multiple dams in East Tennessee and Western North Carolina burst, dams across the region held after the significant rainfall from Helene.

Lake Lure Dam in Rutherford County, North Carolina had water flowing over and around the dam, disrupting roadways and causing fear of failure. Local officials issued an evacuation warning on Friday, but the flow rate has since been controlled and traffic is allowed in the area.

Despite a warning from Cocke County Mayor Rob Mathis that the Waterville Dam had suffered a "catastrophic failure," the Tennessee Emergency Management Agency confirmed that the dam was holding.

The Nolichucky Reservoir in Green County crested Saturday, reaching eight feet over the record elevation, but the dam did not burst. Officials with the TVA confirmed the dam was stable.

And in Haywood County, Walters Dam was confirmed to have held through Helene after major flooding in the area.

Jacob Wilt is a reporter for The Commercial Appeal and contributing to Citizen-Times' coverage. You can reach him at jacob.wilt@commercialappeal.com .

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# 'IT'S ALL JUST GONE' - UNC Asheville women's golf team has to start over after Helene flooding

October 3, 2024 | Times-News, The (Hendersonville, NC) Author: Cameron Jourdan; Golfweek | Section: Sports | 782 Words Page: B1 OpenURL Link

Ross Cash's normal drive from his home in Jonesborough, Tennessee, to Asheville, North Carolina, takes roughly 45 minutes.

Right now, it's impossible for him to make the journey. The women's golf coach at UNC Asheville has no idea when he will get back to campus, let alone what will be at campus when he returns. Hurricane Helene ravaged Asheville and other places in the lower Appalachia region, causing historic flooding that has wiped out towns, livelihoods and will take years to recover from.

The UNC Asheville women's golf team will also have to find a way forward. Its entire facility, an indoor annex just off campus and along the French Broad River, was completely underwater when the river crested. There's a shed, Cash doesn't know from where, now in the parking lot where only hours before the rains started, numerous cars from the golf team were parked as they returned from the Golfweek Red Sky Classic in Vail, Colorado.

"Everything is going to be ruined," Cash said. "The whole building was under 15 to 18 feet of water. We thought the structure itself was gone.

"Everything that I ever really cared about in my career, or just personally, I had in my office, too, and it's just all gone."

Cash estimates the golf team has more than \$150,000 worth of equipment, clothing and other items in its facility. Now, until he and members of the team can get back to campus to examine the full extent of the devastation, they'll have to wait and see.

Cash and his team were not able to fly into Asheville after the Red Sky Classic, so they flew into Knoxville, Tennessee instead and made the drive down Interstate 40 as Helene was barreling north. Cash's leadership at the school, athletic director Janet Cone and chancellor Kimberly van Noort, wanted Cash and the team to check in every 30 minutes on the drive because they were worried about mudslides in The Gorge, an area that meanders between the mountains in a river valley on the interstate between Tennessee and North Carolina.

Only a few hours later, flood waters from the river next to the highway washed away portions of the Interstate, including the lanes the golf team was driving on.

The team made it home safely before Helene reached Asheville, and with the students secure on campus, Cash made his trip home. While the team was gone, Cash had all of his player's cars towed to a higher spot on campus, or they would've possibly been washed away.

The next day, Cash was worried when he couldn't get a hold of anyone in Asheville, from his players to his administration. Cell service was out to the entire area, and communication was essentially impossible.

"It was real strange," Cash said. "It was so eerie to not have anyone be able to answer questions. I was in father mode trying to figure out if everyone was OK."

Eventually, his players made their way to a fire station that had service, and they contacted their coach that they were OK.

Asheville, on the other hand, was not.

At first, Cash wanted to figure out how to get his players to Jonesborough so they could have power and food to eat. What was normally that 45-minute drive had turned into six hours based on GPS maps. Eventually, it said the trip couldn't be made because of how many roads and bridges were washed out.

Eventually, Cash found a way to get his players to Charlotte, back to the east in an area not hit by Helene, and his players all traveled home and away from the devastation.

As for him, he's waiting it out in Jonesborough because there's nowhere else to go. School officials said the plan is to try to open campus on Oct. 9, but at this point, it's unclear whether the infrastructure in Asheville will be able to handle that.

Floods washed out numerous roads and bridges into town, making it somewhat of an island for a few days. Cash is still unsure of when he'll be able to return and what will be waiting for him when he comes back.

The indoor facility is something he has built over time, and it's not something that'll likely be replaced in a blink of an eye. Most of the players had their clubs and important equipment with them since they had just returned from an event, but there's no telling what they'll have to replace once they get back to campus.

"Some communication is starting to open back up," Cash said. "We're all safe, and the girls are all safe. That's what is important."

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#### • Citation (aglc Style)

Cameron Jourdan, Golfweek, "IT'S ALL JUST GONE' - UNC Asheville women's golf team has to start over after Helene flooding', Times-News, The (online), 3 Oct 2024 B1 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?</a> p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BFA74F60595770>



# Where to find help

October 3, 2024 | Times-News, The (Hendersonville, NC)

Section: News 808 Words

Page: A4 OpenURL Link

Here's a list of essential information that may help Asheville-area residents in the aftermath of Helene and extensive flooding.

Asheville Shelters

There are three shelters available:

General public shelter at WNC Agricultural Center (pets accepted), 1301 Fanning Bridge Road, Fletcher

General public shelter at Asheville-Buncombe Technical College, 6 Fernihurst Drive, Asheville (no pets allowed) (use Victoria Road entrance).

Medical Emergency Shelter at Asheville-Buncombe Technical College for individuals dependent on medical equipment requiring power,10 Genevieve Circle, Asheville.

Water Distribution

The city's water system was heavily damaged in the storm, and a boil advisory is in place for Western North Carolina. In a news release, city officials said "restoring service to the full system could potentially take weeks." Meanwhile, water distributions are taking place at:

City Hall. Each person must bring their own container, none will be provided. Each person will be provided 1 gallon of water per person, with a maximum of 5 gallons per family.

Asheville Middle School, 211 S. French Broad Ave., Asheville.

William W. Estes Elementary School, 275 Overlook Road, Asheville.

Sand Hill Elementary, 154 Sand Hill School Road, Asheville (Please enter via Acton Circle).

North Windy Ridge Intermediate School ,20 Doan Road, Weaverville.

Fairview Elementary School, 1355 Charlotte Highway, Fairview.

Pack Square Park. Bring your own container. For the safety of everyone involved, traffic will be directed around the park and the distribution site will be walk-up only.

The Asheville Dream Center is providing rolling updates on aid distribution sites on social media.

Communications:

Wi-Fi Locations

Duke Energy is working to restore power across Buncombe County. Cell service is also down throughout much of the county, with no known restoration timeline. Active Wi-Fi locations include:

Buncombe County Health Department, 40 Cox Ave., Weaverville.

Citizen Vinyl, 14 O'Henry Ave., Asheville.

DoubleTree Hilton Downtown, 199 Haywood St., Asheville.

Asheville Shelter, Ferguson Building, 340 Victoria Road, Asheville.

Curfews in effect

In effect from 7:30 p.m. to 7:30 a.m. within Asheville city limits.

**Emergencies** 

For any life-threatening situations, always call 911. Buncombe County has a line for reports of downed trees, debris and other non-emergencies: 828-250-6650.

Food Distribution Sites

Monte Vista Hotel(food and wifi), 310 W. State St., Black Mountain.

Bears Smokehouse, 135 Cox Ave., Asheville

Firestormis operating as a food and supplies dropoff and distribution location for community members at 1022 Haywood Road in West Asheville.

Asheville Poverty Initiative's 12 Baskets Cafe is serving food to the community.

Rosetta's Kitchen & The Buchi Bar, 68 North Lexington Ave. downtown.

Flour began distributing free biscuits, other baked goods and hot coffee to the public on the morning of Sept. 30 and will continue until supplies last at S&W Market, at 56 Patton Ave., downtown.

Itto Ramen will distribute free food from 2:30 p.m. until supplies last at its West Asheville restaurant, 630 Haywood Road.

Groceries

Food Lion: 179 Paragon Pkwy., Clyde.

Trader Joe's: 120 Merrimon Ave., Asheville.

Ingles Markets (cash only): 575 New Leicester Highway, Asheville.

Walmart: 1636 Hendersonville Road, Asheville.

Publix: 165 Weaver Blvd., Asheville.

West Village Market is open with limited hours selling groceries, such as produce, meat and vegan and nondairy items at 771 Haywood Road, Asheville.

Walls Wine Bar is open and selling beer, wine, vegan cheese and chocolate at its art gallery and wine bar at 38 Broadway St. downtown.

Money: Getting cash

at ATMs

Many stores are unable to take credit or debit cards because of communications disruptions. If you need to get cash, note that lines at working ATMs can be long.

Missing persons reports

To report a person believed to be missing or unaccounted for, voicemails can be left for the Buncombe County Family Assistance Center at 828-820-2761. The county also created a form — bit.ly/3TLSLNK — to notify Buncombe officials of loved ones who aren't accounted for.

School closures

Asheville City Schools: closed.

Buncombe County Schools: closed through Friday, Oct. 4.

Asheville-Buncombe Tech: closed until further notice.

UNC Asheville: all departments Closed until Monday, Oct. 7; classes suspended until Wednesday, Oct. 9.

Western Carolina University: all departments closed through Friday, Oct. 4.

Appalachian State University: Closed through Friday, Oct. 4.

Supplies: Construction

Ace Hardware: 800 Fairview Road, Asheville.

Lowe's: 95 Smokey Park Highway, Asheville.

Home Depot:

795 Fairview Road, Asheville.

127 Acton Circle, Asheville.

To donate

to relief efforts

American Red Cross: redcross.org

GoFundMe: www.gofundme.com/c/act/hurricane-helene

The Salvation Army: www.disaster.salvationarmyusa.org

United Way: support.unitedway.org/page/Helene

World Central Kitchen: wck.org

Humane Society Disaster Relief: www.humanesociety.org

# Text message updates

As a resource in these tough times, we are manning a text message service to bring you and your loved ones the latest updates on Hurricane Helene, connect you with resources and answer any questions you might have. This will give you direct access to reporters and editors in the newsroom who can help you find information about ongoing weather warnings, local services and more.

To sign up, text 'Hello' to (239) 241-6343. If you have friends in the area, please feel free to share this phone number with them so they can sign up for updates as needed.

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## • Citation (aglc Style)

'Where to find help', *Times-News, The* (online), 3 Oct 2024 A4 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?</a> p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BFA74F70D524F8>



# Helene's aftermath - Test of patience, fortitude - WNC residents digging in for the long haul

October 3, 2024 | Times-News, The (Hendersonville, NC)
Author: Keith Sharon, Tiana Kennell Iris Seaton and Kelly Puente; USA TODAY NETWORK Section: News | 1146 Words Page: A1
OpenURL Link

The toughest test of will, patience, fortitude and faith is coming for the residents of Western North Carolina.

As the searches for missing people continue, as the receding water reveals horrors that had been submerged, as the roads (slowly) re-open, as FEMA representatives scramble and stumble, how do people who have lost so much get their lives back to some semblance of normalcy?

COVID may have seemed like the toughest test, but the virus may prove to be a practice round for local business owners, government officials and families. COVID didn't knock out roads. COVID didn't lift homes off their foundations. COVID didn't change beautiful countryside into dangerous terrain.

"We're going through this and we're still trying to recover from the pandemic," Asheville bartender Alex Cohn-Derrick said.

The daily death counts have become more grim in the wake of Tropical Storm Helene with Buncombe County's total rising to 57 as of midday Wednesday.

The ski resort community in Avery County had reported five new deaths. In the Western North Carolina region, the total now stands at 69.

President Joe Biden was scheduled to survey damaged Western North Carolina from a helicopter — after a similar trip to Greenville, South Carolina — on Wednesday afternoon. The president has said he wants to "jump start" the recovery effort by asking Congress to approve a supplemental bill to help cover federal costs for Helene relief efforts.

Biden has directed up to 1,000 active duty troops to immediately deploy to assist with response and recovery efforts in communities hit by Helene, the White House said on Wednesday.

National Guard members on Wednesday were dropping supplies in Blackhawk helicopters in Helene-devastated mountain towns that have largely been cut off from the world for days.

Cohn-Derrick was displaced from her home in Candler after it was consumed by rushing water from a nearby creek. She sought shelter with her Cantina Louie co-workers, Elizabeth Bryan and Trevor Cox. Though the water has retreated, the damage and mold have made her home uninhabitable.

"We've all been fighting for many years to get a fair living wage since COVID, so this hit us hard," Bryan said. "Being in this industry with so many restaurants out of business we don't know what to do from here."

Bryan said many aren't unaware of how to file for unemployment.

The Trinity Fairview Church southeast of Asheville has been serving as a hub where the community has been gathering supplies and working on plans to reach others that have been cut off by downed trees and demolished roads.

"We don't have any cell service, we haven't heard anything," said resident Gina Fowler. "But everyone has been coming together."

Dozens of adults and even their small children formed an assembly line to unload water and other supplies from the helicopter.

They said they were grateful to get bottled water after drinking well water for several days.

Wilkerson said he was glad to be able to personally deliver supplies to his church as a National Guard member, but had to fight back tears.

"It's hard to see them like this, but they're making it," he said.

More than 100 nurses as well as physicians arrived at Mission Hospital in Asheville from sister hospitals across the nation within the HCA Healthcare system, which owns Mission and is headquartered in Nashville, HCA spokesperson Harlow Sumerford said.

They've set up mobile units with kitchens, bathrooms and handwashing stations and are setting up mini marts inside the hospital and in other HCA hospitals across the region to provide doctors, nurses and other hospital staff with free groceries, including food, water and toiletries.

"Though the level of destruction is immense, I am proud of the dedication of our colleagues, who have continued to support our patients, our community and one another," said Greg Lowe, president and CEO of Mission Health. "We remain dedicated to helping our colleagues through this time, just as they have selflessly served their community and supported patients without hesitation."

Vulnerable animals are being shipped out of town for their safety.

The Asheville Humane Society has evacuated around 100 animals to shelters outside of Western North Carolina.

AHS facilities weren't damaged severely during the storm. But a lack of potable water caused by outages affecting all of Asheville and many surrounding areas made it impossible to provide adequate care for a large amount of the animals at the Buncombe County Animal Shelter.

"Potable and clean water is an essential resource for keeping the animals happy and hydrated, but it's also necessary for cleaning the kennels and ensuring that hands are sanitized in preparation for medical procedures," AHS Content Coordinator Colleen Daly said. "And it's extremely difficult, if not impossible, to take care of the number of animals in our care given those circumstances."

For humans, drinking water may be difficult to find for weeks.

North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Kody Kinsley warned western North Carolina residents that well water in addition to municipal water sources may not be safe to drink because of contamination from the flood damage.

"Only use bottled, boiled or treated water for drinking, cooking and personal hygiene," Kinsley said.

There is no timetable for running water restoration in some of the most devastated areas said Asheville Assistant City Manager Ben Woody.

Biltmore Church is supplying community members with water, ice and meals at its Arden campus, 35 Clayton Road.

The Arden campus, in addition to supplying community members, is also a staging ground for groups of Southern Baptist disaster recovery teams that will go out to the community with chainsaws to help clear paths and help with access to homes.

Many of the supplies Biltmore is providing out of its Arden campus were sent from fellow Southern Baptist churches across the state. The Arden campus supply center is open to community members from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. on October 2.

"The total recovery will be many, many months but the urgent needs right now would be trying to help people survive this early thing," said Bruce Frank, Biltmore's lead pastor, in an interview.

More coverage

Buncombe County volunteers make welfare checks. 2A

American Red Cross is setting up a 150-bed shelter. 3A

Asheville Humane Society evacuates around 100 animals. 3A

Asheville private schools share closures. 5A

Why was the flooding in this region so devastating? 6A

Where to find help

Tear out Page 4A for the latest on food, water, electricity and more resources.

Text message updates

As a resource in these tough times, we are staffing a text message service to bring you and your loved ones the latest on Hurricane Helene, connect you with resources and answer any questions you might have. To sign up, text "Hello" to (239) 241-6343.

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# Red Cross sets up 150-bed shelter

October 3, 2024 | Times-News, The (Hendersonville, NC) Author: Jacob Biba; Asheville Citizen Times | Section: News | 565 Words Page: A3 OpenURL Link

ASHEVILLE – In response to Tropical Storm Helene, which left a trail of destruction across Western North Carolina last week, crew members from the American Red Cross were at the former Gold's Gym location in South Asheville Oct. 1, setting up an emergency shelter that can accommodate more than 100 evacuees.

The former fitness center at 1815 Hendersonville Road is owned by Novant Health, a nonprofit health system based in Winston Salem.

According to Maekala Mims, a community disaster program manager with the Red Cross, who was on-site Oct. 1, the shelter will be staffed by a rotating group of 10 crew members, 24 hours a day, and will have approximately 150 cots with blankets.

"Once those get here and we get them set up, we will be ready to open up the shelter," Mims told the Citizen Times.

As of Oct. 1, power had already been restored to the site, which didn't sustain any major damage. The Red Cross plans to deliver a shower trailer and bathroom and will have medical staff on hand, according to Mims.

Mandy McMahon, a spokesperson with the Red Cross, told the Citizen Times the organization did not have an estimated time for opening.

The Red Cross has a list of open shelters and other disaster-related services that can be found here.

Other Asheville shelters

There are two shelters available at Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College:

General Population Shelter: A-B Tech Conference Center, 16 Fernihurst Drive, Asheville, NC 28801 (Please use Victoria Road Entrance). No pets allowed

Medical Emergency Shelter for individuals dependent on medical equipment requiring power: 10 Genevieve Circle, Asheville, NC 28801

Area hospitals seeing more patients

As of Sept. 30, HCA Healthcare's Mission Hospital tallied more than 900 visits related to Tropical Storm Helene. More than 200 of those visits resulted in admission to the hospital, Mission Hospital CEO Greg Lowe said at a Sept. 30 news briefing. More than 80 of those patients are currently in the emergency room, according to Lowe.

For Mission, the most urgent problem is the growing water crisis, which poses both long and short-term health risks for Asheville residents. Without high pressure water, hospital functions are "significantly challenged," as even simple tasks like hot food preparation, toileting and showers are not possible, Lowe said.

It's unclear when water service will be fully restored, but the City of Asheville has indicated it may take weeks to get back online.

According to a Sept. 30 news release from Hendersonville's Pardee Hospital, which is managed by UNC Health

Care, the Henderson County hospital's cancer center has "partially" resumed operations and is now seeing patients with previously scheduled infusion or lab appointments, as well as cancer patients in need of acute care related to treatment.

Additionally, Pardee Rx at 1027 Fleming Street in Hendersonville is open to fill emergency prescriptions for community members, according to the health system.

As of Sept. 30, AdventHealth Hendersonville, a nonprofit health system in Henderson County, was still in the process of confirming water safety after the county lost much of its service, according to a Sept. 30 news release. Power and phone service had been restored at its hospital.

Pardee and AdventHealth did not respond to a Citizen Times request seeking an update on its current operations as of Oct. 1.

Jacob Biba is the county watchdog reporter at the Asheville Citizen Times. Reach him at jbiba@citizentimes.com.

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## Relief nurses, doctors rush to aid exhausted medical staff

October 3, 2024 | Times-News, The (Hendersonville, NC) Author: Beth Warren; USA TODAY NETWORK| Section: News | 865 Words Page: A1 OpenURL Link

A bevy of nurses, relief workers and supplies from across the U.S. are pouring into Western North Carolina this week to aid hospitals besieged by patients amid the deadly flooding from Tropical Storm Helene.

More than 100 nurses as well as physicians arrived Monday at Mission Hospital in Asheville from sister hospitals across the nation within the HCA Healthcare system, which owns Mission and is headquartered in Nashville, HCA spokesperson Harlow Sumerford said.

They've set up mobile units with kitchens, bathrooms and handwashing stations and are setting up mini marts inside the hospital and in other HCA hospitals across the region to provide doctors, nurses and other hospital staff with free groceries, including food, water and toiletries.

HCA also is providing hundreds of thousands of bottles of water, tens of thousands of gallons of fuel and satellite data networks to Mission Hospital.

The hospital, perched atop a hill just south of downtown Asheville, dodged flooding that submerged much of Buncombe County but is scrambling to keep up with an onslaught of patients from several counties.

North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper got an aerial tour Monday of ravaged areas and then took a tour of Mission Hospital, where hospital officials called restoration of city water services to the hospital a top priority, according to a pool report.

Mission is sending surgical instruments to Charlotte for sterilization due to the limited availability of pressurized water in Asheville.

When asked if a well is being dug near the hospital to provide clean water, Sumerford said that "while we are hopeful the Asheville community's infrastructure will be restored soon, we are exploring a variety of solutions."

"Though the level of destruction is immense, I am proud of the dedication of our colleagues, who have continued to support our patients, our community and one another," Greg Lowe, president and CEO of Mission Health, said during a media briefing. "We remain dedicated to helping our colleagues through this time, just as they have selflessly served their community and supported patients without hesitation."

Every day since the storm, 20 water tanker trucks have brought clean water to feed the air-conditioning chillers and to keep the hospital functioning, Lowe said. He said many employees remained at the hospital in the storm's aftermath despite being concerned about the well-being of loved ones.

"We know that we are providing safe care, good quality care, but we're stretched. We're very stretched," Lowe said. "It has become difficult with our staff because they're exhausted."

An example of the volume they're coping with, more than 80 emergency room patients waited to be admitted Monday afternoon. The hospital also is getting ready for the discovery of more victims, setting up three mobile morgues.

"We're preparing for what's next," Lowe said.

The death toll has risen to 64 in Western North Carolina, with 57 of those fatalities in Buncombe County, according to Sheriff Quentin Miller's news briefing at 4 p.m. Tuesday.

More than 1,000 hospital workers have been sleeping at the hospital since the flooding, Kody Kinsley, secretary of the state's Department of Health and Human Services, said during the news conference Monday.

"We went to Mission Hospital to see firsthand the heroic efforts of the individuals of that hospital," he said.

The health department is working with insurers to identify residents who rely on oxygen and other medical supplies and proactively offer to have emergency management make deliveries.

The health department also has activated the patient transfer system, sending patients who can't get immediate care in impacted areas to other medical centers across the state.

Meanwhile, the Federal Emergency Management Agency sent medical professionals to Mission and HCA-owned Blue Ridge Regional Hospital in Spruce Pine, which serves residents in the town and the surrounding North Carolina mountain communities of Mitchell County.

Since many of the medical professionals also are flooding victims, the hospital system also set up HCA Healthcare Hope Fund, an employee-run, employee-supported charity that provides financial aid and resources after an extended illness, injury or disaster.

"We are contributing \$1 million toward disaster relief efforts, including \$250,000 to the United Way of Asheville and Buncombe County, \$250,000 to the American Red Cross of North Carolina and an additional \$500,000 to other community partners that provide direct support for hurricane related issues," hospital officials said in a news release.

Pardee Hospital in Hendersonville, part of the University of North Carolina health care system, lists flooding-related closures for all of its medical facilities as well as resources on its websites.

Pardee issued a statement to patients Tuesday on its website, which read in part: "To ensure the safety of our patients and teammates, we have made the difficult decision to cancel all appointments for Tuesday."

It advised patients to wait for a call to reschedule appointments "in the coming days." The emergency room remained open and Pardee Urgent Care opened at noon Tuesday in Brevard. A list of services impacted by the floods are listed online.

UNC Health is offering free virtual visits from 6 a.m.-10 p.m. seven days a week for adult residents of Western North Carolina impacted by Hurricane Helene. Those ages 18 and older with mild systems can see a UNC Health primary care provider without an appointment on the health system's website.

Reporters Evan Gerike and Will Hofmann contributed to this report.

Reporter Beth Warren can be reached at bwarren@gannett.com.

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# Asheville Humane Society evacuates about 100 animals

October 3, 2024 | Times-News, The (Hendersonville, NC) Author: Iris Seaton; Asheville Citizen Times | Section: News | 618 Words Page: A3 OpenURL Link

"This is going to be — I mean, it is — an unprecedented challenge to care for our animals." Asheville Humane Society Content Coordinator Colleen Daly

The Asheville Humane Society has evacuated around 100 animals to shelters outside of Western North Carolina in the wake of Tropical Storm Helene.

AHS facilities weren't damaged severely during the storm. However, a lack of potable water caused by outages affecting all of Asheville and many surrounding areas made it impossible to provide adequate care for many of the animals at the Buncombe County Animal Shelter.

"Potable and clean water is an essential resource for keeping the animals happy and hydrated, but it's also necessary for cleaning the kennels and ensuring that hands are sanitized in preparation for medical procedures," AHS Content Coordinator Colleen Daly said. "And it's extremely difficult, if not impossible, to take care of the number of animals in our care given those circumstances."

The BISSELL Pet Foundation flew in more than 1,000 pounds of food and supplies provided for the shelter's animals and staff alike. Then, staff reloaded the plane with carriers full of 57 cats, 40 dogs and other animals, Daly told the Citizen Times the animals were taken to Forsyth Humane Society to be distributed to safe shelters away from the destruction left by Helene.

"If you can't safely care for an animal, it does them no good to keep them here, and we were so fortunate that we had access to other shelters in the area through the Bissell Foundation, to give our animals the care they deserve," she said.

Without running water, the AHS is not accepting animals at this time. Instead, it suggests that if you find an animal, shelter it as best you can, provide food and water and reach out to community resources for any assistance needed.

How to help the Asheville Humane Society

Daly said the two primary needs of the AHS for now are gas and monetary donations at their Venmo @ashevillehumane or at tinyurl.com/AshevilleHumaneDonate.

"This is going to be — I mean, it is — an unprecedented challenge to care for our animals," Daly said. "And although we sent out every animal in our care that was in a good spot to be transported, we still have medical needs animals here that we need to care for, and we need to prepare for a potential influx of animals, and that is made possible through donations."

The AHS also often needs volunteers. However, specific needs can be inconsistent 75464801007 a "hurry up and wait" situation, as phrased on the organization's Facebook page. It suggests joining its volunteer Facebook group to keep an eye out for volunteer requests.

During Helene, Daly lost her vehicle and apartment. But the outpouring of support for the AHS and mutual aid seen both across the region and in Daly's own workplace has been on the top of her mind. She had a final message of gratitude for the WNC community to express.

"Thank you for caring for our animals and the people that care for them," Daly said. "We've had staff members who have lost everything, who still showed up to work to care for the animals that they love, and they've built relationships with, and that's made possible by the folks who have ensured that both our animals and staff have every possible resource we can get."

Iris Seaton is the trending news reporter for the Asheville Citizen Times, part of the USA TODAY Network. Reach her at iseaton@citizentimes.com.

"This is going to be — I mean, it is — an unprecedented challenge to care for our animals." Asheville Humane Society Content Coordinator Colleen Daly

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# Asheville private schools share closures

October 3, 2024 | Times-News, The (Hendersonville, NC) Author: Zachary Huber; Asheville Citizen Times | Section: News | 615 Words Page: A5 OpenURL Link

ASHEVILLE - Western North Carolina communities continue recovery efforts after Tropical Storm ravaged the area. There are still many road closures and thousands of people without power and water despite those efforts, leading to the Asheville area's private schools remaining closed, along with city and county public schools.

## Asheville School

Asheville School announced in a Facebook post the morning of Oct. 1 that all its students safely departed campus on Sunday evening. In an Instagram post Sunday, Asheville School said it was without power and running water. The private university-preparatory boarding school in West Asheville also extended its closure until Oct. 14, with classes set to begin the next day again. However, that timeline is subject to change based on the restoration of essential infrastructure on campus. It plans to have another update on Friday.

#### Christ School

Christ School, a private all-boys school in South Asheville, is still without power and running water but has Wi-Fi, thanks to a donation, according to a Facebook post Monday. All boarding students left campus on Monday night. Christ School began its fall break on Monday and will return to campus on Oct. 14, with classes resuming the following day. As of Tuesday afternoon, the entrance to campus is blocked by fallen power lines and trees.

## Asheville Christian Academy

Faculty, staff and administrators returned to Asheville Christian Academy, finding significant damage. Athletic Director Joe Johnson said the first floor of its three buildings was flooded and the gym floor destroyed. Athletic fields and tennis courts were also ruined. Asheville Christian Academy is located in Swannanoa, one of the hardest hit areas by Tropical Storm Helene.

#### Carolina Day School

Carolina Day — a K-12 school in Biltmore Forest — said it would remain closed through Oct. 14. Initial inspection of campus found minor damage and fallen trees across the ground. Carolina Day hopes it can begin the recovery process later this week or next. It said the main issue preventing it from reopening is the lack of water and power. Carolina Day will send out another update on Wednesday, Oct. 9, to update whether it will be able to reopen on Oct. 15.

#### Veritas Christian Academy

Veritas Christian Academy said in a Facebook post on Monday that it will not reopen this week. It also plans to send out a survey to the community about when school could resume.

## **Odyssey Community School**

The K-12 Odyssey Community School in Montford will remain closed until further notice to keep the roads clear for emergency services and to ensure everyone's safety.

## Reynolds Mountain Christian Academy

Reynolds Mountain Christian Academy said the school fared well through Tropical Storm Helene with only minor repairs.

#### **Emmanuel Lutheran School**

Principal Mark Edmiston said on Facebook Sunday that there will be no school at Emmanuel Lutheran in West Asheville until further notice. Once utilities have been restored, Emmanuel Lutheran School will communicate when they will reopen.

An administrative assistant Shari Reaves said the Orphan Grain Train, a Christian volunteer network that donates supplies to communities in needs, will arrive at the school Wednesday afternoon. They will serve dinner open to the public from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. They will also distribute lunch from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Thursday and Friday. Reaves said staff is also bringing drinking water to hand out.

The New Classical Academy

The New Classical Academy said the school is in good condition but is closed until further notice, according to a Facebook post on Monday.

Zachary Huber is a high school sports reporter for the Asheville Citizen Times and Hendersonville Times-News. Email him at zhuber@gannett.com or follow him on X @zacharyahuber.

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# October is typically more active hurricane month

October 3, 2024 | Times-News, The (Hendersonville, NC) Author: Doyle Rice and Dinah Voyles Pulver; USA TODAY | Section: News | 526 Words Page: A11 OpenURL Link

The 2024 Atlantic hurricane season entered its fifth month Tuesday, and experts are again taking stock of a deadly and puzzling season.

The year started with dire predictions of a hyperactive season, quickly followed by the explosive and recordbreaking landfall of Beryl in early July. Then came an odd mismatch in Pacific and Atlantic activity during a midseason lull.

But now, Hurricane Helene's deadly and devastating rampage across the Southeast last week has obliterated any hope of a quiet hurricane season for the U.S. And unfortunately, there's plenty of the season still to go.

"October is historically an active month, particularly in the Caribbean Sea, Gulf of Mexico and off the U.S. Southeast coast," said Brian McNoldy, a hurricane research scientist at the University of Miami.

Meterorologist Michael Lowry, a hurricane specialist at WPLG-TV in Miami, expects "to see a return of big hurricanes going into the first full week of October," he wrote in his daily update Tuesday.

"I would say that Helene doesn't really have any bearing on the rest of the season's forecast, but right now, large-scale conditions are highly conducive for tropical cyclone formation in the eastern Atlantic," said Phil Klotzbach, a senior research scientist at Colorado State University.

Klotzbach said their latest forecast calls for a very busy two weeks, due to Hurricane Kirk, Invest 91L (the wave behind Kirk) and potentially a system in the northwest Caribbean/Gulf.

"Everywhere in the tropical Atlantic still has record or near-record high ocean heat content, so there's no shortage of fuel for whatever might form anywhere," said tMcNoldy.

Using the storm names that have been retired since 1953 as a proxy for storms that made landfall and had great impact, September has the most retired names, with 43, McNoldy said. August and October are essentially tied at 21 and 20, and only seven storm names have been retired from November storms.

However, it's also worth noting that October and November together have more retired storm names than June, July and August combined, he said. "So we must absolutely still be on alert for tropical cyclone threats in the remainder of hurricane season."

It's also important to remember that it doesn't take a strong hurricane to cause a lot of damage, McNoldy said. "A slow-moving, disorganized disturbance that maybe doesn't quite become a tropical storm can unleash feet of rain over an area and create terrible flash flooding," he said. "The rainfall threat from tropical systems has historically taken a back seat to the wind threat in people's minds, despite being deadlier."

Although Kirk will be turning north and staying over the open Atlantic, long-period swell from the large hurricane could reach all the way to the East Coast – from the Mid-Atlantic into coastal areas of the Northeast – by early to middle of next week, Lowry said.

Behind Kirk, Invest 91L has been designated off the coast of Africa and will develop into a named storm over the next day or two. Computer models show 91L strengthening into a powerful hurricane next week, but like Kirk, it

should turn well east of the islands.

In the spring, the Colorado State team predicted 23 named storms would form, of which 11 would be hurricanes.

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# Buncombe volunteers check on neighbors - Center received 12K requests for welfare checks

October 3, 2024 | Times-News, The (Hendersonville, NC) Author: Sarah Honosky; Asheville Citizen Times | Section: News | 786 Words Page: A2 OpenURL Link

ASHEVILLE - More than 12,000. That's how many requests for help the Register of Deeds office has received since it started the Family Assistance Center.

The office has generated a list of names submitted by people looking for missing family, friends and neighbors and is mobilizing volunteers to make welfare checks — meaning door-to-door visits in some of the county's hardest hit areas.

Register of Deeds Drew Reisinger said about two-thirds of those on the list are from Buncombe County.

The morning of Oct. 1, at the downtown office, dozens gathered outside its doors, awaiting instructions. Sirens whooped and chattered, a near constant background noise in recent days, as ambulances and police cars raced along the outer streets of the city center.

While downtown was spared much of the damage seen in other areas in the county, particularly those along the French Broad and Swannanoa rivers, the mark of Helene's hand remained: downed branches and debris, lines wrapping around blocks for water distribution or at a café still dispensing hot coffee, port-a-potties that appeared almost overnight in Pack Square Park.

Volunteer Caroline Paulsen, sitting in a folding chair outside the Register of Deeds' doors, said she had also gone out the day before, armed with a list of five names, each of someone that a friend, family or neighbor told the office they couldn't get in touch with, which, she said, often is a result of the lack of cell reception. In Buncombe County, countless roads are still blocked. Widespread power and water outages persist.

"We went to five doors and three of the people were there, in good health and doing just fine," she said. The fourth apartment was in the Swannanoa flood zone, across from Lowe's, and "nobody was there." They waded through mud to reach the door.

The final house was intact, a generator running, but no one answered. Volunteers are sent to make contact if possible and gather information. If available, they are given supplies to distribute. A list of codes is written in sharpie and posted around the office — NH (not home), OK; OKB (OK, but); and: Escalate.

Paulsen was there to help out her community, she said.

"It doesn't feel important to be doing my normal job (right now)."

The county remains in active search and rescue and recovery for community members who remain trapped in homes, it said at a 10 a.m. briefing. Volunteers with the Register of Deeds knocked on more than 300 doors on Sept. 30.

'Triage' as it comes

"Work didn't need me. My home is settled. I can clean up later," said Lauren Baer, among the assembled volunteers. It was her first day volunteering to do the welfare checks. "I'm gassed up, I've got two vehicles. I've got chainsaws. I don't know what people need, so I'm just here to help."

"It's definitely emotional looking at the damage," she said.

"It's awesome that we have so many people out here wanting to help and you see it on a daily basis. You see it on an hourly basis."

As she spoke, a car pulled up with supplies. Someone popped the trunk and yelled for "hands." As people rushed forward, Baer paused mid-thought to gauge if they still needed help.

"Our real goal is just trying to help people," Reisinger. "I want you to be on your game, identifying needs, report those needs back to us if you can't fill them."

Everyone's needs may look differently, he said. They are also looking for places that may need "escalation." If a house is gone, alert someone immediately so professional teams can be sent in.

"We've got to triage each situation as it comes," he said.

Need help?

The Register of Deeds has developed a web-based form to assist people in finding and connecting with residents of Buncombe County. Anyone inside or outside of Buncombe County can use this to report someone who might be missing or who cannot be reached.

The Family Assistance Form can be found at https://bit.ly/3BjnVWq. You can also call 828-820-2761.

Information will be reviewed by the Buncombe Search Team, which will create and maintain a list of people who are currently unreachable and work with Buncombe County Emergency Operations Center to find information.

Sarah Honosky is the city government reporter for the Asheville Citizen Times, part of the USA TODAY Network. News Tips? Email shonosky@citizentimes.com or message on Twitter at @slhonosky. Please support local, daily journalism with a subscription to the Citizen Times.

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# Charlotte clergy organize to deliver help and hope to Tryon, other areas affected by Hurricane Helene

October 3, 2024 | Tryon Daily Bulletin, The (NC) Author: Ben Hillyer| Section: Community | 684 Words OpenURL Link

by Emily Enders Odom | Presbyterian News Service

As longtime ministry colleagues in the Presbytery of Charlotte in North Carolina, the Rev. Dr. Lori Archer Raible and the Rev. Dr. Amantha Barbee have maintained a close friendship through the years, united in their love of neighbor and their shared passion for justice.

Both of which propelled them into immediate action this week in the aftermath of Hurricane Helene.

"If we have a relationship with the pastor in the affected area and they let us know exactly what they need, we deliver on those immediate needs," explained Raible, who serves as pastor/head of staff at Selwyn Avenue Presbyterian Church in Charlotte. "In this case, our church responded to a request from [the Rev. Dr.] Allan Purtill at Tryon (North Carolina) Presbyterian Church. We're going out again [Thursday] to First Presbyterian Church of Spruce Pine (North Carolina), where they are really struggling. We know that any action we're taking this week is triage in the hope that larger efforts will kick in by the end of the week."

Barbee, a ministry engagement advisor for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) based in Charlotte, had only just returned home from vacation to heavy rains, strong winds and a loss of power and internet service when she immediately contacted her friend at Selwyn Avenue.

"I knew we had to do something," Barbee said, "so when Lori told me that they were gathering supplies to bring to the folks in Western North Carolina, I started talking to neighbors. There's also a bike shop across the street from the church, who saw the ongoing effort and offered the use of their van. And since even with that I saw that they still didn't have enough transportation, I volunteered my own, huge pickup truck."

Not only did she contribute her truck, Barbee made the trip to Tryon herself.

"Driving from Charlotte to Tryon, at first it was nothing, then the closer you got ...," said Barbee, who paused to take a breath.

"I had an image in my head from Sunday evening when I was pulling some weeds out from the roots," she continued, "and to see trees that looked exactly like that was very sobering. Huge trees that looked like my weeding. The beautiful stream was a muddy mess with uprooted trees. The Tryon church parking lot was filled with mud. I could see concrete pointed to the sky, just snapped in half."

Once at the church, Barbee learned that the small group of volunteers leading the relief effort were all without power themselves.

"God bless them for doing the work," she said. "To be able to help others when you are suffering yourself was inspiring."

Both Barbee and Raible understand that while such grassroots efforts are critically important in the short term, the recovery will be lengthy.

"This is the connectional church at its best, doing what we can do while we're waiting to hear what long-term displacement looks like," said Raible. "It will be a long road."

Barbee said that while society as a whole has become numb upon hearing news of such disasters as raging wildfires in California and devastating mudslides in the U.S. and across the globe, "it's a different feeling" when disaster strikes so close to home.

"As siblings in Christ, we've got to get back to a place where I have the same feelings when I see the forest fires in California," she said. "I didn't sleep for three nights because I didn't hear any news about my friends in Western North Carolina. Because we've become numb to those we don't know, it was good for me to have a conversation with the members of the Tryon church, whom I didn't know, in order to realize that even in their pain, they're out there helping others."

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance is one of the Compassion, Peace & Justice Ministries of the Presbyterian Mission Agency. You can donate to help with the hurricane response of Presbyterian Disaster Assistance by clicking here, or you can text HELENE24 to 41444.

The post Charlotte clergy organize to deliver help and hope to Tryon, other areas affected by Hurricane Helene appeared first on The Tryon Daily Bulletin.

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