

# WSSU earns StormReady designation - Winston-Salem State University earns StormReady designation

September 25, 2024 | Winston-Salem Journal (NC)

Author: CHAEWON CHUNG Staff Reporter | Section: A | 512 Words

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Winston-Salem State University is now a StormReady campus, making it the second historically Black university in the UNC system and the second higher education institution in Forsyth County to achieve the designation.

StormReady is a voluntary program sponsored by the National Weather Service that helps communities prepare for severe storms. Established in 1999, the StormReady program supports communities through different measures, including 24-hour warning and emergency operations centers, local weather monitoring systems, and emergency exercises.

"It's important that communities are more resilient through preparation that will reduce their vulnerability from extreme weather and water events," Winston-Salem State Chancellor Bonita Brown said at last week's recognition ceremony held in the Donald J. Reaves Center.

"Our Office of Emergency Management took initiative to get through this very rigorous process for our campus to be prepared when, not if, disaster strikes," she added.

The National Weather Service reports that weather-related events account for some 90% of all presidentially declared disasters, resulting in approximately 650 deaths annually and nearly \$15 billion in damages per year. Since 2016, North Carolina has faced four major storms, including Hurricane Matthew and Florence, that have led to significant flooding, loss of life, and billions in financial losses.

Last month, Tropical Storm Debby brought heavy rainfall across the state, leading to widespread power outages and four deaths.

"The Weather Service in our Weather Ready Nation program is all about building resiliency to bad weather, to severe weather," Nicholas Petro, warning coordination meteorologist of the National Weather Service in Raleigh, said at the event.

"And as you heard some of the stats, weather claims lives, costs a lot of damage, and it's going to happen. So we need to be ready."

According to Petro, the designation process typically takes around six months, but the timeline can vary based on the preparation and groundwork completed by the candidate before applying.

Chaewon Chung covers climate change and the environment in the Triad and Northwest North Carolina. Her work is funded by a grant from the Green South Foundation and the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation.

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### Hurricane Helene could dump heavy rains on Charlotte area, Carolinas' mountains, NWS says

September 24, 2024 | Charlotte Observer, The: Web Edition Articles (NC) Author: Joe Marusak, The Charlotte Observer | Section: weather\_news | 627 Words OpenURL Link

Gov. Roy Cooper declared a state of emergency on Wednesday, as Hurricane Helene prepares to dump heavy rains on the Charlotte area and North Carolina mountains.

Helene strengthened from a tropical storm before noon Wednesday and is forecast to become a major hurricane Thursday night, according to the National Hurricane Center in Miami.

Widespread heavy rain is expected late Wednesday afternoon and will persist through Friday morning, National Weather Service meteorologists in the Greer, South Carolina, office said Wednesday morning on X, the former Twitter.

Charlotte could see 2" to 4" of rain from Helene, and the mountains and foothills 6" to 10," according to the National Hurricane Center.

Charlotte has a 70% chance of rain on Thursday and a 90% chance late Thursday and early Friday, the 5 p.m. Wednesday forecast showed.

Gusts are predicted to increase from 14 mph during the day on Thursday to 41 mph Thursday night and early Friday, according to the forecast. Friday has an 80% chance of rain, with gusts up to 45 mph.

"Severe flash flooding (mainly across our western areas) and strong winds leading to power outages could develop Thursday night," according to the NWS on X.

Charlotte officials said crews are preparing for heavy rain and strong gusts knocking down trees and limbs.

Call 911 immediately if a tree or part of a tree has fallen and blocks a road, officials said.

Charlotte Motor Speedway opened its campgrounds at noon Wednesday for Helene evacuees from across the Southeast. Evacuees should check in at the Camping World Racing Resort office at 6600 Bruton Smith Blvd. in Concord.

Caldwell County also declared a state of emergency. Haywood County in the mountains urged residents to prepare for possible evacuation due to flooding from Helene.

Already, one Charlotte-area school system announced Wednesday that Friday classes are canceled due to Helene — Catawba County Schools. Friday will be an optional teacher workday.

The storm could spawn tornadoes and knock out power, according to an alert by the NWS Greer office.

Cooper also activated the National Guard and deployed swift-water teams in advance of Helene.

"Helene threatens heavy rain, flash flooding, landslides, and damaging winds to the mountains and Piedmont areas of our state," Cooper said in a statement. "Now is the time for North Carolinians to prepare, make sure emergency kits are up-to-date and pay attention to the weather alerts in your area."

Helene should arrive in the western Carolinas and northeast Georgia Thursday night and Friday, "bringing gusty winds and heavy rainfall to the area," according to an alert by the NWS Greer office.

Helene's predicted path shifted west of Charlotte overnight to the extreme western Carolinas' mountains, Tennessee, Kentucky and, eventually, Indiana and a sliver of Ohio, according to National Hurricane Center maps of the storm at 5 p.m. Tuesday. The Charlotte region should still expect rains and winds from the storm, NWS forecasters said in an alert.

"The flood threat will become significant Thursday night into Friday," according to the NWS. "This has the potential to be an extremely rare event."

Helene is expected to bring life-threatening storm surges and hurricane-force winds to the Florida Panhandle and Florida west coasts, National Hurricane Center officials said Tuesday.

"Residents should ensure they have their hurricane plan in place," center officials said, referring to Floridians.

Storm surge watches also were in effect Tuesday night for parts of the Florida Gulf Coast, according to the National Hurricane Center.

At 8 p.m. Wednesday, Helene was about 430 miles southwest of Tampa, Florida, with 85-mph winds.

Weakening is expected after landfall on Florida's Big Bend coast Thursday night, center officials said. "But Helene's fast forward speed will allow strong, damaging winds, especially in gusts, to penetrate well inland" across the Southeast, "including over the higher terrain of the southern Appalachians."

This is a developing story that will be updated.

Wednesday NWS Helene tweet embed

Tuesday night NWS hurricane update

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Joe Marusak, The Charlotte Observer, 'Hurricane Helene could dump heavy rains on Charlotte area, Carolinas' mountains, NWS says', *Charlotte Observer, The: Web Edition Articles* (online), 24 Sep 2024 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BCBD07E3BF7958">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BCBD07E3BF7958</a>



### Possible hurricane forcing changes with this week's Charlotte-area HS football schedule

September 24, 2024 | Charlotte Observer, The: Web Edition Articles (NC) Author: Steve Lyttle and Langston Wertz Jr., The Charlotte Observer Section: high\_school | 444 Words OpenURL Link

Another stormy weekend, another change in the high school football schedule.

With potential Hurricane Helene forecast to affect much of the Southeast later this week, the high school schedule is getting a do-over, with many of Friday's games being moved to different days.

Of the six weekends so far this high school football season, three have been marked by bad weather on Friday nights.

Forecasters say Helene will still be a tropical storm as it moves into northeast Georgia on Thursday night, and that means potentially big impacts for parts of the Carolinas.

Athletic officials are walking a meteorological tightrope.

Earlier forecasts called for the worst conditions Friday evening and night. Now the heavy rain and strong winds are predicted for Thursday night and Friday morning. But more changes in the forecast are possible, meteorologists say.

As of late afternoon Tuesday, more than a dozen games involving area teams have been rescheduled.

Two of those are now scheduled to be played at 7 p.m. Wednesday — Harding at North Mecklenburg, and Covenant Day at Charlotte Latin.

Mecklenburg games now scheduled for 7 p.m. Thursday are Butler-Providence, SouthLake Christian-Trinity Christian, Corvian Community-Christ the King, Palisades-Myers Park, and Providence Day-North Raleigh Christian.

Other games have been rescheduled for Saturday and Monday.

In all, about 75 games in the Carolinas had been rescheduled, as of late Tuesday afternoon.

Justin Lane, of the National Weather Service's office in Greenville-Spartanburg, said the worst conditions are expected from Charlotte westward.

"Total rainfall amounts are expected to range from 4 to 7 inches across much of the area west of around I-77," Lane said.

He also said wind gusts of 35 to 50 mph are possible in parts of the western Carolinas.

Changes announced so far:

Moved to 7 p.m. Wednesday

Harding at North Mecklenburg

Covenant Day at Charlotte Latin

Moved to 7 p.m. Thursday **Butler at Providence** Corvian Community at Christ the King Palisades at Myers Park Providence Day at North Raleigh Christian SouthLake Christian at Trinity Christian East Lincoln at Statesville Jay M. Robinson at Jesse Carson Northwest Cabarrus at East Rowan Kings Mountain at North Gaston Parkwood at Eastern Randolph Winston-Salem Prep at Pine Lake Prep Moved to 2 p.m. Saturday St. Stephens at North Iredell Moved to 7 p.m. Monday North Lincoln at Hickory As of midday Tuesday, several South Carolina games have been rescheduled, but none of those were in the York-Lancaster counties area. Soccer affected: The threat of severe weather Thursday and Friday also is having an impact on the boys' high

school soccer schedule. The big match between Myers Park (7-0-1) and Ardrey Kell (8-1-3) has been moved to 7 p.m. Wednesday at Ardrey Kell. It previously had been set for Thursday.

Volleyball affected: Officials at Pine Lake Prep said the volleyball team's Senior Night festivities have been moved to Thursday, with the varsity match set for 5:30 p.m.

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### Two killed in Mexico as storm John weakens and Helene moves in

September 24, 2024 | Courier-Times, The (Roxboro, NC) Author: Daniel Rook | Section: National | 419 Words OpenURL Link

At least two people died after Hurricane John slammed into Mexico's southern Pacific coast, but as the now-weakened storm dissipated Tuesday, tropical storm Helene threatened over the Caribbean.

Hurricane John hit the coast as a Category 3 storm overnight with winds of up to 120 miles (193 kilometers) per hour, before being downgraded to a tropical storm and largely dissipating by Tuesday afternoon.

Forecasters nevertheless warned of strong rains and possible flash floods inundating the coast for the next few days.

The passage of John left a woman and a child dead after a landslide hit their home in the mountainous southern town of Tlacoachistlahuaca, Evelyn Salgado, the governor of the Mexican state of Guerrero, told a news conference.

The US-based National Hurricane Center (NHC) said in an afternoon update that the remnants of the storm were about 70 miles from the resort city of Acapulco, with sustained winds of 35 miles per hour.

The storm caused jitters among residents of Acapulco, where memories are still fresh of Hurricane Otis, a scale-topping Category 5 storm that left a trail of destruction and several dozen people dead in October last year.

Marta Sotelo told AFP her nerves were frayed as winds blew in, in the same way as Otis had, with "raised dust, metal sheets, everything."

"The children became hysterical," she told AFP, adding that she and her relatives preferred to wait out John in a shelter.

-'Flash flooding' -

The southern states of Guerrero and Oaxaca were hardest hit by the storm, and thousands of military and emergency personnel have been deployed.

Some 300 shelters were set up to aid residents in high-risk areas.

The governor, Salgado, said towns in Guerrero had registered heavy rainfall, road closures, power outages and the suspension of classes.

Oaxaca has seen fallen trees in several municipalities and road damage. Airports in the region's resort towns of Huatulco and Puerto Escondido suspended operations.

The NHC had warned that while John has been downgraded, there remained a risk of "significant and possibly catastrophic, life-threatening flash flooding and mudslides" in the southern states of Chiapas, Oaxaca and Guerrero.

Hurricanes hit Mexico every year on both its Pacific and Atlantic coasts, usually between May and November.

On Tuesday, Tropical Storm Helene formed in the Caribbean putting the resorts of Cancun, the Riviera Maya and Tulum on alert.

According to the path predicted by the NHC, Helene is expected to gain hurricane strength at dawn on Wednesday

off Cancun, but will not make landfall.

Helene is due to make landfall in the US state of Florida on Thursday as a powerful Category 3 hurricane.

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