

NCHSAA commissioner: Damage from Hurricane Helene could affect NC prep playoff schedule

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Author: Langston Wertz Jr.; Staff Writer | Section: Sports | 540 Words

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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 girls' 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."

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'KEEP THINGS IN - PERSPECTIVE' - UNC coaches, players focus on more than football after Helene ravages North Carolina

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Chapel Hill For North Carolina's football coaches and players, any lingering pain from the loss to Duke has been tempered by the devastation that has been experienced by so many in the western part of North Carolina.

Lives have been lost, homes have been destroyed and families and communities badly disrupted by the carnage caused by Hurricane Helene.

"I know how important our sport is," UNC coach Mack Brown said Monday. "We love football and we love the kids. But I want thoughts and prayers for the people in western North Carolina. ...

"Roads are out, trees are down. They are encouraging people not to go to the mountains. The people up there can't get off the mountain. They don't have food. There's no water in some of the hospitals. I mean, it is totally devastating to think a storm can do that much damage."

UNC defensive coordinator Geoff Collins played college football at Western Carolina. He said his mother lives in Franklin, southwest of Asheville. His wife is from Lenoir and has long-time friends there. One of his best friends lives near Swannanoa.

"That area is near and dear to my heart, for a lot of reasons," Collins said Monday.

Brown said it was important this week to "keep things in perspective." And, yes, there is another football game to prepare for - Saturday against undefeated Pittsburgh.

'They are great kids'

The noon game at Kenan Stadium offers the chance for the Tar Heels (3-2, 0-1 ACC) to put aside the 21-20 loss at Duke, even its ACC record and perhaps tamp down the increased "outside noise" that has come - much of it on social media - after a couple of losses.

Brown realizes the "Mack must retire" crowd will not quiet down anytime soon. At 73, after 36 years as a head coach, after winning a national championship, the Hall of Famer might also come to that conclusion - after the season, not during it. Or not at all.

While Brown was so angry after the 70-50 loss to James Madison that he apparently offered to step aside, he's still the coach and its his program. He has work to do. And he wants to do it while shielding, as best he can, much of the criticism from the players.

"We have great fans," Brown said. "Some are better than others. Some are vocal, some are not. Usually the really positive fans don't say anything; they go back to work. The negative fans gripe when you're winning. They go crazy when you're losing.

"What we've got, like Saturday, is be mad at me. I'm mad at me. So come to the game to support the kids. They are great kids. And they are trying and they are college kids. I've been a head coach for 36 years, so there's nothing anyone can say, to me or about me, that I haven't heard, good or bad. I've had it all."

Explaining the loss at Duke

Brown, Collins and offensive coordinator Chip Lindsey did their best Monday to explain how the Tar Heels took a 17-0 halftime lead over Duke, increased it to 20-0 in the third quarter and then lost the rivalry game.

There were the expected plaudits for Duke, now 5-0. Lindsey noted the Heels' lost their offensive rhythm in the second half against a Duke defense that intensified the pressure. As for Collins, he talked about missed tackles and needing better execution in alignments and taking care of assignments.

Brown said he thought his team became frustrated and "panicked" - his word - during the loss to James Madison two weeks ago at Kenan. That didn't happen against Duke, he said.

"We tried to do too much," he said. "That's when missed assignments come and missed tackles. They tried to do too much because they want to win so badly.

"And (Duke) has good players. So when they make a play, don't think the world is coming to an end."

Collins said the same. The Blue Devils got in a nice groove running the ball in the second half, winning the play upfront, mixing in some sizable pass plays, and the Heels could not slow their momentum.

"Some things started sliding away from us," Collins said. "When things started happening negatively, and we're going to stop doing this, we have a tendency to try to do too much and try to do things outside the framework of what our individual responsibility is."

On Rucker, and Holstein

Collins said the defensive staff identified 12 plays that affected the game, saying eight of those plays involved missed tackles. That's correctable stuff, he said, and the possible return of edge rusher Kaimon Rucker - out the first five games with a lower-body injury -- for the Pitt game would be a boost for the defense.

And not just on the field with his play. "He knows which buttons to push, which guys to put his arms around, which guys to ramp up or which guys to calm down," Collins said.

Brown said Pitt (4-0) has more of a multiple look on offense this season with Alabama transfer Eli Holstein taking over at quarterback. The 6-4, 225-pound freshman had thrown for 1,183 yards, with 12 touchdowns and two picks - three TD passes in each game.

"He, to me, is the difference on the football team," Brown said. "Same defense, same tough guys. They make it really hard to run. For us, again, we're going to have to throw the ball better.

"They are the most complete football team we've played this year."

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Grant Williams has seen everything with the Charlotte Hornets, ready to 'commit to winning'

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Grant Williams feels he has seen Spectrum Center flip.

The 25-year-old forward entering his second season on the Charlotte Hornets remembers attending games during the franchise's 7-59 season in 2011-12. It felt as though fans just wouldn't even be inside the building, or casual basketball spectators would fill seats while donning different teams' jerseys.

Williams, who grew up in west Charlotte and won a state championship at Providence Day, initially sat courtside for the first time in his life during a Hornets game against the Golden State Warriors. With J. Cole sitting behind Williams, Stephen Curry dropped more than 40 points on Charlotte, and the crowd had its cheers for the local talent.

Williams has seen it all.

He attended a Hornets-Warriors game during the following season, and remembers watching Kemba Walker - who's now on Charlotte's staff as a player enhancement coach - "whooping that tail."

It wasn't just that the NBA team that represents the city in which he grew up was starting to play well. The Hornets were gaining support, and that was something he wanted to help sustain.

"I know that happens quickly," Williams said Monday at the Hornets' preseason media day. "We just have to do our job as players to really commit to winning."

Hornets donate

\$1 million to Hurricane Helene relief efforts

The Charlotte Hornets Foundation announced that it has committed \$1 million to aid the American Red Cross and Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolina in their ongoing Hurricane Helene relief efforts.

Most of the Hornets began their remarks at media day with a message for those affected by the hurricane.

Williams, the former Tennessee star who became one of four local high school basketball players named All-Observer player of the year twice, noted that he has grandparents who are turning 89 and 90, respectively. Still being able to regularly play in front of them is a blessing.

"Whether it's your time, whether it's your efforts, volunteering your finances to the victims: They're right there in our backyard," Williams said. "People I know in Charlotte, Asheville, family members of mine across the way have been affected.

"Just the community here. I know the importance of basketball in the state of North Carolina. I know the importance of the Charlotte Hornets and Carolina Panthers, because I've been here, and when we're at our best, the city's at its best."

Seth Curry, the Charlotte Christian graduate whom the Hornets quickly re-signed in the offseason, offered a similar sentiment.

"I'm worried about everybody affected by Hurricane Helene in the western part of the state," Curry said. "It's been a rough past week, so I just want to say our thoughts and prayers are with everybody trying to get everything they need to recover from this awful, awful tragedy."

Hornets will 'do everything we can as an organization'

New head coach Charles Lee said he's already been noticing how the city of Charlotte rallies and bands together.

For example, Spectrum Center has been going through renovations, and spaces inside the arena are moving amid the construction. He's noticed how they've had to "figure it out," even if it's as simple as knowing when to walk down a different hallway.

"Living in Charlotte and hearing about all the devastation that took place in all the Carolinas, just want them to understand that they are in our thoughts and prayers," Lee said. "I know there's already been a message from the Hornets' organization sent out to everybody, and our ownership group is trying to help financially in the relief efforts.

"The videos are pretty devastating, and it's a tragic situation. Having a family myself and knowing what you have to go through to lose your home, power and all those things, it's really tough."

Jeff Peterson, the Hornets' executive vice president of basketball operations, kicked off all the news conferences on Monday morning by acknowledging the devastating impact that Hurricane Helene has had on the Carolinas.

"Our hearts and thoughts and prayers are going out to them," Peterson said. "We're going to do everything we can as an organization to make it a little bit better. We know it's not perfect, and we just want to continue to let them know that we're thinking about them."

'We want to be a consistent, relevant contender'

Peterson, who begins his first season in his new role, joked about how he even had his clothes laid out ahead of his first media day.

He's been excited about the ways in which new owners Rick Schnall and Gabe Plotkin have built this roster - taking immense pride in character and bringing in the most competitive group it can.

"We wanted to take a holistic approach in terms of just having sustainable success," Peterson said. "It's not one of these things where we want to make the playoffs one year, and then we're out for another four years; Or make the play-in game one year, and then we're out for five. We want to be a consistent, relevant contender.

"You don't do that overnight, right? It takes time. You have to build it the right way. You can't skip steps. We're very strategic in every move to see if that's possibly going to impact that goal, knowing it's the north star."

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Triangle teams get involved with helping storm victims

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RALEIGH Two NC State football players are working with their family to assist survivors of Helene, the massive storm that ravaged western North Carolina.

Brothers Davin and Rylan Vann are working with their mother, Joy Hall-Haley, who owns Joyful Moving, and Durham Rescue Mission to collect supplies for residents in western North Carolina. They have set up on the east side of Close-King Indoor Practice Facility, across from Carter-Finley Stadium. The goal is to "fill a truck" that will leave Thursday.

"It's just devastating to see people that have lost everything; their whole livelihood, their homes," Hall-Haley said on Monday afternoon. "I can't imagine, as a mom, going through that same kind of thing. It's just amazing to see people already. I really didn't think that people were gonna come and bring stuff, but I was wrong."

About two hours after the game on Saturday, Hall-Haley said the family discussed how it could help support the survivors.

Hall-Haley admitted she second-guessed herself on Sunday, unsure if they could pull off the feat. Monday, they decided it was possible.

"I just said, 'Nope, I'm going to do it. I want to help. Davin wants to help, so let's do it,'" Hall-Haley said.

She texted N.C. State head coach Dave Doeren on Monday morning about using the football facilities as a collection site. His response came within seconds and he was "on board immediately," Davin Vann said.

It means a lot to be part of a program and to play for a coach who supports efforts like this, Hall-Haley and Davin Vann said.

"I think it says a lot about coach Doeren," Davin Vann said. "He does a lot of charity work himself, so I think him allowing us to use the facility for us to do some is very great."

"It makes me feel happy and thankful for Coach Doeren," Hall-Haley added. "And, thankful that my boys made the right choice to come here."

All items collected by the family and its Joyful Moving team will be given to Durham Rescue Mission for distribution. Due to the storm's impact, organizations must obtain specific authorization. There were also concerns about reaching the affected areas.

If the truck ends up full, Hall-Haley said there are plans to bring more on site. They are also willing to lead other efforts, because she knows the recovery period will take years.

Collection times are Monday from 3 p.m. to 8 p.m., and Tuesday and Wednesday from noon to 8 p.m. During his weekly news conference, Doeren encouraged residents to bring items and fill the truck with supplies.

"Really proud and thankful for Davin and his family. Davin probably just came off the best game of his career, as well," N.C. State coach Dave Doeren said on Monday. "For that to be on his mind today, I think, says a lot about that young man and his family."

Davin, a defensive end, is in his fifth season at N.C. State and second consecutive as a team captain. The graduate student recorded career highs with 10 tackles, 3.5 tackles for loss and two forced fumbles Saturday against Northern Illinois

Rylan, a redshirt sophomore offensive lineman, is in his third season with the Pack.

Aydan White, Isaiah Shirley and Zack Myers are all from the impacted region, Doeren said. Their families are safe but called it a "scary time for them." Doeren's son, Jacob, attends Appalachian State in Boone. His second son, Connor, plays at East Tennessee State. ETSU's team bus was stranded in the flooding on its way to a game. Both are safe, as well.

"I think the damage is so much worse than people even understood," Doeren said. "All the people, the homes, the businesses, communities, state parks that have just been devastated by this flood, it's really sad and tragic. We are here praying and thinking a lot about the folks in the western part of the state."

Duke launches donation drive

Duke University's football coach announced Monday that the Blue Devils will also shepherd a donation drive.

The donation drive will run through Oct. 11, with items accepted at the Duke athletics ticket office in Scott Family Athletics Performance Center at 110 Whitford Drive, Durham, from 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m., Monday-Friday. In addition Two Men and Truck will have truck parked at Tribull Plaza during Countdown to Craziness this Friday to collect items.

Items requested are: non-perishable food, bottled water, contractor-size trash bags, blankets, first aid supplies, feminine hygiene products, diapers and baby clothes, hand sanitizer, toilet paper, paper towels, bleach, shovels, brooms, gloves, coolers, flashlights, batteries and fans.

As an extra incentive, Duke offers two discount ticket packages.

The first offer is \$25 for one east reserved football ticket for Virginia Tech at Duke on Nov. 23 plus one reserved women's basketball ticket for Belmont at Duke on Nov. 21.

The second offer is \$45 for one general admission (standing room only) men's basketball ticket for Seattle at Duke on Nov. 29 plus one general admission women's basketball ticket for Belmont at Duke on Nov. 21.

For every five items donated from the list, fans can purchase one ticket package.

In addition, a Two Men and a Truck vehicle will return to Morton Plaza at Duke on Oct. 18 to collect donations when Florida State and Duke play football that night at Wallace Wade Stadium. The ticket offer will not be in effect for the Oct. 18 donation site.

Duke football coach Manny Diaz said one of his assistant coaches got in touch with a high school football coach from Western N.C. on Monday and heard grim details of the situation.

"To hear (about) people just cut off from civilization because of the roads either being impassable or just flat out gone," Diaz said, "Bridges wiped out. People who have cars who can't take them anywhere. People who can't get to their cars or are out of gas. Just the destruction and the disruption of life.

"These are the things that you would expect in a movie. And this is real life going on in our state right now. And so again, it's something that we want to be a part of helping in any way we can."

Requested supply donations

Toothbrushes
Toothpaste
Deodorant
Hand sanitizer
Menstrual products
Diapers
Baby wipes
Pre-mixed baby formula
Cleansing wipes
Shampoo
Body wash
Flashlights, lanterns and batteries
Blankets, sleeping bags and pillows
Socks
Shelf-stable food
Canned goods (preferably pop-top cans)
Bottled water and water jugs
Electrolyte drinks (such as Gatorade)
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Lake Lure Dam in Western NC stable after imminent failure warning; emergency repairs begin

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Author: Drew Jackson and Tammy Grubb; Staff Writer | Section: News | 320 Words

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The Lake Lure Dam, which was feared doomed to collapse on Friday, is stable and emergency repairs are set to begin.

At the peak of Helene's rains, a warning went out that the Lake Lure Dam was at imminent risk of failing, as water spilled over the top of its 124-foot tall structure. An evacuation order was issued for residents below, but the dam held. On Friday, an engineer assessed the dam and found the water level receding.

By Sunday, the water level was lowered an additional 3 and a half feet, so emergency repairs could be made, according to Josh Kastrinsky, spokesman for the NC Department of Environmental Quality.

"The structure remained intact following the storm," Kastrinsky said in an email. "Water caused erosion on both sides of the dam abutments but it was not undermined."

The town of Lake Lure announced on its Facebook page Sunday afternoon that the dam is stable. Previously, town officials discouraged any unnecessary travel to the area and said to stay off Lake Lure roads unless trying to leave town.

The Lake Lure Dam was assessed Saturday by Schnabel Engineering and a plan for emergency repairs was determined, the town said. Officials from FEMA are also expected to asses the dam.

The dam, built in 1925 and 1926, is a tourist and recreational destination for the rural county. It also harnesses the Broad River and two creeks to power a hydroelectric plant producing electricity for Duke Energy from two hydroelectric turbine generators.

Dam workers typically lower the water in the lake by as much as 8 inches below the normal lake level before big storms, according to a document posted on the town's website. The town manager approves lowering the lake by more than that amount, it notes.

Most residents in Lake Lure remain without power, as of Sunday, according to town officials.

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Dean's List: What to know about the search for NC State's next chancellor, so far

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Author: Korie Dean; Staff Writer | Section: News | 1313 Words

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Next academic year will mark a new era for NC State University, as a new leader takes the helm from longtime Chancellor Randy Woodson.

Woodson announced in July his plans to retire by the end of the current academic year. By the time he leaves the university, he will have been chancellor for 15 years.

Although Woodson's expected departure is still at least eight months away, the search to find his successor is already well underway.

So, when could the new chancellor be named?

Welcome to Dean's List, a roundup of higher education news in the Triangle and across North Carolina from The News & Observer and me, Korie Dean.

In this week's edition, I'll get you up-to-speed on the search for NC State's next chancellor and a decision Wake Forest University leaders made to cancel an on-campus event that was scheduled to feature a pro-Palestinian speaker.

Here we go.

NC State chancellor search updates

UNC System President Peter Hans wasted no time getting the search started, naming the committee tasked with finding the next chancellor the day after Woodson made his announcement this summer.

Hans, as outlined in UNC System policy, will serve on the committee and is also tasked with selecting the final nominee to submit to the system Board of Governors for approval.

Ed Stack III, an NC State alumnus and vice chair of the university's Board of Trustees, is serving as chair of the committee.

The additional members of the committee, chosen in accordance with UNC System policy, are:

Ed Weisiger Jr., NC State Board of Trustees chair

Timothy Humphrey, NC State alumnus and Board of Trustees secretary

Ghazale Johnston, NC State alumna and Board of Trustees member

David Powers. NC State alumnus and Board of Trustees member

Wendy Floyd Murphy, Board of Governors chair

J. Alex Mitchell, NC State alumnus and Board of Governors member

Harold Martin, chancellor emeritus of North Carolina A&T State University

Charles Hall, NC State Staff Senate chair

Herle McGowan, NC State Faculty Senate chair

Allison Markert, NC State student body president

Dewayne Washington, NC State alumnus

The search committee is tasked with gathering feedback from the campus community about the traits they feel are important in the next chancellor, recruiting and interviewing candidates and selecting an unranked slate of at least three finalists to submit to the university's Board of Trustees.

The Board of Trustees then forwards three finalists to Hans, who makes the final selection and submits the preferred candidate to the Board of Governors.

Chancellor searches in the UNC System are confidential, so only those on the committee and directly involved with the search process will officially know the identities of the candidates not selected for the job - even after the search concludes. The vote to hire chancellors must take place in a public, open meeting.

The search committee met for the first time Sept. 10, during which Hans delivered his charge to the group and outlined the timeline and process for the search. During those remarks, he said he hopes a new chancellor will be named by the end of the academic year in May.

"We're fortunate that Chancellor Woodson has given us a generous runway to complete this search and ensure a new leader is ready to pick up the baton without missing a step," Hans said.

Students, faculty, staff, alumni and other members of the NC State community can give their input on the search and the next chancellor by completing an anonymous online survey.

Hans said Sept. 10 that the survey had already received more than 4,000 responses - which he believed "must be a system record."

The search committee will also host listening sessions with various groups on campus. The first sessions will be held:

Tuesday, Oct. 1, from 3:30-5 p.m. at D.H. Hill Jr. Library (for faculty)

Wednesday, Oct. 2, from 11 a.m.-noon at Talley Student Union, Mountains Ballroom (for staff)

Hans has previously said that chancellor searches take between six and nine months, though the recent search UNC-Chapel Hill moved much quicker.

To keep up with the latest information on the search at NC State, visit: chancellor.ncsu.edu/search-process.

Wake Forest cancels event with pro-Palestinian speaker

Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem will no longer allow a pro-Palestinian scholar to speak on campus next Monday, the one-year anniversary of Hamas' surprise attack on Israel, The Old Gold & Black, Wake Forest's student newspaper, reports.

A handful of campus departments were set to host an event Oct. 7 titled "One Year Since al-Aqsa Flood: Reflections on a Year of Genocide and Resistance" with San Francisco State University professor Rabab Abdulhadi as the

speaker.

Abdulhadi, who is Palestinian American and serves as the director and senior scholar of the Arab and Muslim ethnicities and diasporas studies program at SFSU, has been denounced by the Anti-Defamation League and other groups.

In 2020, Zoom canceled an event Abdulhadi planned to host with Leila Khaled as a speaker. In 1969, as a member of the U.S.-designated terrorist group Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, Khaled participated in the hijacking of a commercial airplane.

The Old Gold & Black reported that a group of faculty who research "genocide and memory studies" proposed the event and received approval from the university's Humanities Institute.

But after the event was announced, a petition calling for it to be canceled quickly gained attention and support - with more than 8,500 signatures in five days.

Then, last Thursday, Wake Forest President Susan Wente and Provost Michele Gillespie announced in a campus message that the event would be canceled and that no other "events on this day that are inherently contentious and stand to stoke division in our campus community" would be allowed, either.

Instead, the university will host an interfaith prayer service and a community reflection event.

"As a university community, there are many ways that we could choose to recognize this day," Wente and Gillespie wrote. "At Wake Forest, we will emphasize our ability to come together to support one another, holding space for our many different perspectives and experiences. As such, we invite you to join us for several university-sponsored events."

Wake Forest ranked No. 144 out of roughly 250 universities for its "tolerance for speakers" in the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression (FIRE) College Free Speech Rankings, released earlier this month.

You can read more of The Old Gold & Black's coverage of this story on its website.

WNC universities closed after Helene

As you probably know, Hurricane Helene devastated much of Western North Carolina late last week.

The destruction spread to several of the region's colleges and universities, most of which will be closed for at least a week as they work to repair and rebuild. That includes:

UNC Asheville, where classes are canceled until Wednesday, Oct. 9.

Appalachian State University, which is closed until Friday, Oct. 4.

Western Carolina University, which is also closed until Oct. 4.

Warren Wilson College, where classes are canceled until Oct. 14.

Lees-McRae College, which is closed until Oct. 4.

Montreat College, which is closed until Sunday, Oct. 6.

Classes resume at Lenoir-Rhyne University Tuesday.

Campuses across the UNC System have stepped up to help the public universities impacted by the storm. Among

other efforts, NC A&T State University and Winston-Salem State University sent emergency management personnel to UNC Asheville, while East Carolina University sent food trucks and NC State sent student affairs and facilities staff.

"Our emergency response was underway even before the storm hit," Hans said in a Monday news release. "I want to especially thank the campuses across our state that have provided mutual aid and much-needed support to their sister universities in the mountains. The scale of this disaster is tremendous, and the recovery is going to be long and difficult."

You can read more about the damage caused to these campuses here.

Higher ed news I'm reading

UNC-Chapel Hill police served a student with a search warrant for the contents of her phone at her on-campus apartment, The Daily Tar Heel reports. Police sought the warrant in connection with a protest during which pro-Palestinian demonstrators vandalized campus buildings.

See you next week

Thanks for reading this week's Dean's List. I hope to see you right back here next week.

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Baxter plant in Marion closed because of Helene flooding; 2,500+ workers affected

October 2, 2024 | Hickory Daily Record (NC) Author: RICHARD CRAVER Winston-Salem Journal | Section: Business | 536 Words OpenURL Link

The North Cove manufacturing plant of Baxter International Inc. has experienced significant flooding damage from the remnants of Hurricane Helene, the company said Tuesday.

The Marion campus is closed for production. It is Baxter's largest manufacturing facility with more than 2,500 employees.

Production primarily involves making intravenous and peritoneal dialysis solutions. Baxter is the largest U.S. manufacturer of these solutions.

"Our hearts and thoughts are with all those affected by Hurricane Helene," said José Almeida, Baxter's chair, president and chief executive.

"The safety of our employees, their families and the communities in which we operate remains our utmost concern, and we are committed to helping ensure reliable supply of products to patients.

The company said "it is working around the clock in close coordination with local, state and federal officials to assess the extent of the damage and implement a plan to bring the plant back online as quickly as possible to help mitigate supply disruption to patients."

"Remediation efforts are already under way, and we will spare no resource -- human or financial -- to resume production and help ensure patients and providers have the products they need," Almeida said.

The damage occurred in spite of Baxter's preparation efforts, which included evacuation plans for workers, moving products to higher ground or secure storage where feasible.

However, the company said the heavy rain and storm surge triggered a levee breach, which led to water permeating the site. The bridges accessing the site have been damaged.

The Baxter International Foundation has committed \$1.5 million in donations to help address recovery needs, including allocating additional funds to its Employee Disaster Relief Fund, and is matching employee donations \$2 for \$1 toward relief efforts.

Baster said the temporary closing of the Baxter plant is expected to "negatively impact the company's financial results."

"Once the company can more fully assess the damage, it will be in a better position to estimate any expected impact and plans to provide an update in its third-quarter earnings announcement."

On Tuesday, the N.C. Division of Employment Security listed McDowell County among 25 counties in northwest and western N.C. whose citizens have been declared eligible for federal disaster unemployment assistance benefits.

The eligibility is a byproduct of the Biden administration's declaration of a state of emergency in North Carolina.

The assistance covers individuals who are unemployed as a direct result of Hurricane Helene. Business owners and self-employed individuals affected by the storm also may qualify for benefits.

Benefits would be made retroactive to Sept. 29 and may last for up to 26 weeks.

The other counties, along with the Cherokee Indians of N.C., are: Alexander, Alleghany, Ashe Avery, Buncombe, Burke, Caldwell, Catawba, Clay, Cleveland, Gaston, Haywood, Henderson, Jackson, Lincoln, Macon, Madison, McDowell, Mitchell, Polk, Rutherford, Transylvania, Watauga, Wilkes and Yancey.

The division said additional counties may be added at a later date.

Eligible individuals have until Dec. 2 to file an application for disaster unemployment assistance at des.nc.gov or the DUA Hotline at 919-629-3857.

Individuals must first apply for state unemployment benefits. For those determined to be ineligible for or have exhausted regular state benefits, they may be eligible to make a federal disaster unemployment assistance claim.

Eligibility is determined weekly, and individuals must continue to be out of work as a direct result of the disaster each week to get unemployment benefits.

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RICHARD CRAVER Winston-Salem Journal, 'Baxter plant in Marion closed because of Helene flooding; 2,500+ workers affected', Hickory Daily Record (online), 2 Oct 2024 https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view? p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BF66E5311673B8>



Searches underway as Helene deaths pass 165

October 2, 2024 | Hickory Daily Record (NC) Author: Staff Writer | Section: News | 136 Words OpenURL Link

SWANNANOA, N.C. — Cadaver dogs and search crews trudged through knee-deep muck and debris Tuesday looking in the mountains of western North Carolina for victims of Hurricane Helene, days after the storm carved a destructive path through the Southeast.

With Helene's death toll passing 165, searchers used helicopters and hiked through wilderness to reach isolated homes. The storm knocked out power and cellular service in some towns and cities, leaving people frustrated, hot and increasingly worried. Some cooked food on charcoal grills or hiked to high ground in the hopes of finding a signal to contact loved ones.

"Communities were wiped off the map," North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper said Tuesday at a news conference. Devastation was especially bad in the Blue Ridge Mountains, where at least 57 people died in and around Asheville, a tourism haven.

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Staff Writer, 'Searches underway as Helene deaths pass 165', *Hickory Daily Record* (online), 2 Oct 2024 https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BF4F1EDFFA1C88



Nearly 300,000 gallons of untreated wastewater spilled during Hurricane Helene

October 2, 2024 | Hickory Daily Record (NC) Author: Miya Banks | Section: Government Politics | 125 Words OpenURL Link

The city of Hickory had two wastewater spills during Hurricane Helene, which was a tropical storm when it hit North Carolina on Sept. 27, according to a press release from the city.

One was at 310 Cloninger Mill Road, with approximately 110,000 gallons of untreated wastewater spilling into Falling Creek, the press release said.

The second was at 4014 River Road, with approximately 183,125 gallons of untreated wastewater spilling into the Henry Fork River, the press release said.

The press release said the water remains safe.

"The Division of Water Resources was notified of the event, and the spills had no negative impact on the environment," the press release said. "If you have any questions about these bypasses, call the city of Hickory Public Utilities Department at 828-323-7427."

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• Citation (aglc Style)

Miya Banks, 'Nearly 300,000 gallons of untreated wastewater spilled during Hurricane Helene', *Hickory Daily Record* (online), 2 Oct 2024 https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BF4F1EBB653728>



WANT TO HELP?

October 2, 2024 | Hickory Daily Record (NC) Author: SARAH C. JOHNSON sjohnson@hickoryrecord.com| Section: Want To Help| 1093 Words OpenURL Link

WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA | HELENE AFTERMATH

The remnants of Hurricane Helene hit western North Carolina Friday, bringing significant flooding and damage. The storm left many residents without power, water or cell service.

In the days since, federal, state and local governments have worked to help the area recover. Also helping are numerous private companies and individuals.

Here is information about food, shelter, power and donation sites in McDowell, Burke, Catawba and Iredell counties and surrounding areas.

Meals, shelters for flood victims in western NC

Grace Community Church will be providing hot meals at 5182 U.S. 70 West in Marion.

Lunch will be served from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Dinner will be served from 4-5:30 p.m. Local emergency shelters are listed below:

- Glenwood Baptist Church 155 Glenwood Church Road in Marion
- Marion Senior Center 100 Spauling Road in Marion
- YMCA of Marion 438 Grace Corpening Drive in Marion
- Oak Hill Methodist Church 2239 N.C. 181 in Morganton
- West Caldwell High School 300 West Caldwell Drive in Lenoir

Food, water, supplies in McDowell County

Numerous agencies from all across McDowell County continue to assist McDowell County Emergency Management with points of distribution. These places will operate daily from 10 a.m. to noon and 4-6 p.m., depending on available supplies. The locations are as follows:

- Hicks Chapel Church 6008 U.S. Hwy. 221 N. in Marion
- Former TJ's Discount 8153 U.S. Hwy. 221 N. in Marion
- Old Fort Town Hall 38 Catawba Ave. in Old Fort
- New Manna Baptist Church 225 E. Court St. in Marion
- Solid Rock Free Will Baptist Church 7860 N.C. Hwy. 226 S. in Nebo

Food, water and ice in Burke County

Burke County has set up a donation and distribution location at Foothills Higher Education Center in Morganton. The center is at 2128 S. Sterling St., Morganton.

Donations are being accepted from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. every day and will be distributing needed items from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. every day.

The county is offering free bags of ice at four locations:

- Old Kmart parking lot 110 Bost Road, Morganton
- Fiddlers Run Shopping Center 160 Fidler Run Blvd., Morganton
- Brentwood Water Corporation 1911 Jamestown Road, Morganton
- Foothills Thrift Store 2886 U.S. Hwy. 17, Morganton

North Carolina Helene disaster relief funds

Want to donate money to help Hurricane Helene victims? Here are two official relief funds for North Carolina.

Monetary donations can be made to the N.C. Department of Public Safety's disaster relief fund at nc.gov/donate.

The North Carolina United Way is also accepting monetary donations through NC 211 at united-waync.org.

Sarah Johnson is the courts and breaking news reporter for the Hickory Daily Record.

Where to donate for flood relief in western NC

Looking to donate food, clothes or toiletries to flood victims in western North Carolina? Here are donation sites in Catawba, Caldwell, Burke, Iredell and McDowell counties.

Several sites around the Catawba Valley are collecting donations:

- N.C. State Highway Patrol station 3265 U.S. Highway 70 SE in Conover
- Catawba County United Way office 2760 Tate Blvd. SE in Hickory
- WHKY office 526 Main Ave. SE in Hickory
- ullet Conover Fire Department, Station No. 3 1776 Village Square NW in Conover
- Hickory Motor Speedway 3130 U.S. Highway 70 SE in Newton
- Klingspor Abrasives 2566 Third Ave. NW in Hickory
- ullet Brookford Police Department lobby 1700 S. Center St. in Hickory
- Long View Town Hall 2404 First Ave. SW in Long View (Until Oct. 7)
- Adrian L. Shuford Jr. YMCA 1104 Conover Blvd. E. in Conover
- Hickory Foundation YMCA 701 First St. NW in Hickory
- Lincoln County Family YMCA 1402 Gaston St. in Lincolnton

- Sally's YMCA 1601 Forney Creek Parkway in Denver
- Phifer Family YMCA 2165 S. Sterling St. in Morganton
- Lower Creek Baptist Church 633 Lower Creek Drive in Lenoir (10 a.m. to 4 p.m.)
- Statesville Regional Airport 238 Airport Road in Statesville (8 a.m. to 4 p.m.)
- Statesville Fire Department Station No. 1 822 Fifth St. in Statesville
- ullet Statesville Fire Department Station No. 2 110 Security Drive in Statesville
- Statesville Fire Department Station No. 3 779 Eastside Drive in Statesville
- Statesville Fire Department Station No. 4 115 Martin Lane in Statesville
- Universal Advanced Manufacturing Center 634 College Drive in Marion
- Foothills Higher Education Center 2128 S. Sterling St. in Morganton

Report missing people in McDowell County

If you or someone you know is in need of assistance, call the Helene Hotline at 828-652-3241. The 24/7 volunteer operators are standing by to help. The hotline can be used for the following:

- 1. Report missing or stranded persons
- 2. Request transportation to a shelter
- 3. Report urgent medical equipment needs (oxygen, life-saving medication)
- 4. Any other questions or concerns

Items needed for flood victims

Don't know what to donate? Here is a list of items that local donations sites are requesting.

- Powdered drink mix packets
- Bottled water
- · Baby formula/baby food
- · Nonperishable food items
- Plastic utensils
- Paper plates/cups
- · Manual can openers
- Toiletries

 Toothbrushes/toothpaste Hand sanitizer · Baby wipes · Diapers for adults/children Sanitizing wipes • Feminine hygiene products • Bug spray Sunscreen · Dog/cat food Cat litter New clothes Unopened socks of all sizes Blankets · Heavy-duty work gloves · Plastic tarps · Cleaning supplies • Trash bags 13-gallon or bigger Batteries • Flashlights • Chain saws (Brookford Police Department only) Statesville Fire Departments are not accepting used clothes, water, fuel or flammable items, most chemicals including bleach, or hazardous materials. Other sites are not accepting glass items. Power outages in Catawba Valley Nearly 65% of McDowell County was without power on Tuesday at 10:45 a.m. There were 19,562 customers out of 30,262 with no power, according to PowerOutages.us. Half of Burke County residents still had no power as of Tuesday. As of 10:45 a.m., 21,853 out of 43,519 customers

Nearly 40% of Caldwell County remained without power as of 10:45 a.m. on Tuesday. Out of 42,228 customers,

were without power, according to PowerOutages.us.

16,134 still did not have power, according to PowerOutages.us.

On Tuesday, 9,836 customers out of 82,391 in Catawba County were still without power, according to PowerOutages.us.

On Tuesday, 1,643 customers out of 19,481 in Alexander County were still without power, according to PowerOutages.us.

How to apply for FEMA assistance

Did you experience damage from Tropical Storm Helene? If you live in Alexander, Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Buncombe, Burke, Caldwell, Catawba, Clay, Cleveland, Gaston, Haywood, Henderson, Jackson, Lincoln, Macon, Madison, McDowell, Mitchell, Polk, Rutherford, Transylvania, Watauga, Wilkes or Yancey counties or are a tribal member of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, FEMA may be able to help with serious needs, displacement, home repair or other expenses.

To apply, go online to DisasterAssistance.gov, use the FEMA app for mobile devices or call 800-621-3362.

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Western NC courts, including Catawba County, canceled due to Hurricane Helene

October 2, 2024 | Hickory Daily Record (NC) Author: Sarah Johnson | Section: Crime Courts | 296 Words OpenURL Link

Courts in at least 22 counties in western North Carolina — including Caldwell, Catawba and McDowell — have canceled court, according to the N.C. Judicial Branch.

Court filing deadlines for 28 counties were extended by N.C. Chief Justice Paul Newby on Sunday. Alexander, Burke, Caldwell, Catawba and McDowell counties were included in the order.

All criminal and civil hearings for Catawba County District Court and Catawba County Superior Court have been canceled through Friday, according to the N.C. Judicial Branch website. The Catawba County Courthouse is at 100 Government Drive, Newton.

Burke County District Court is closed through Friday. Burke County Superior Court was closed Tuesday. Decisions about Superior Court are being made on a day-by-day basis, Assistant District Attorney Mitch Walker said. The Burke County Courthouse is at 201 S. Green St. in Morganton.

Caldwell County District Court is closed through Friday. Caldwell County Superior Court is open for criminal cases, according to the N.C. Judicial Branch website. The Caldwell County Courthouse is at 216 Main St. NW in Lenoir.

The McDowell County Courthouse is closed due to power outages and flooding from Hurricane Helene. The N.C. Judicial Branch website says McDowell County courts are closed through Wednesday. The McDowell County Courthouse is at 21 S. Main St. in Marion.

Filing extension for western NC

Chief Justice Paul Newby ordered that all pleadings, motions, notices and other documents that were due to be filed between Sept. 26 and Oct. 14 shall be deemed timely if filed by the end of business on Oct. 14. That includes documents for civil actions, criminal actions, estates and special proceedings.

The counties included in the order are Alexander, Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Buncombe, Burke, Caldwell, Catawba, Cherokee, Clay, Cleveland, Gaston, Graham, Haywood, Henderson, Jackson, Lincoln, Macon, Madison, McDowell, Mitchell, Polk, Rutherford, Swain, Transylvania, Watauga, Wilkes and Yancey.

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Lenoir pilot makes emergency landing in Hickory after delivering supplies to Avery County

October 2, 2024 | Hickory Daily Record (NC) Author: Sarah Johnson | Section: Local | 318 Words OpenURL Link

An airplane that was returning from Avery County made an emergency landing at the Hickory Regional Airport on Wednesday.

At 12:45 p.m., the N.C. State Highway Patrol responded to an airplane crash in Catawba County at the Hickory Regional Airport, Trooper Christopher Casey said in a news release.

The pilot, Jordan Seth Faught, 41, of Lenoir, was not injured, Casey said.

The single-engine Cessna experienced a mechanical failure, resulting in an emergency landing on the runway. The plane was returning from Avery County after delivering supplies to areas impacted by Hurricane Helene, Casey said.

Kevin Buxton is a volunteer with the efforts to ship emergency supplies to western North Carolina following Hurricane Helene. Buxton witnessed the emergency landing. He said the plane's landing gear did not come down. The pilot circled a few times before landing without the gear. The plane slid around 60 feet on its belly. After stopping, Faught exited the plane, Buxton said.

The plane landed on a runway directly behind the main building of the Hickory Regional Airport. Emergency responders were still on scene at 3 p.m.

The N.C. Highway Patrol secured the scene. The Federal Aviation Administration will investigate, Casey said.

Emergency supplies to aid the mountain communities of North Carolina have been shipped out of regional airports, including the Hickory Regional Airport and the Statesville Regional Airport, since the weekend.

Buxton said the supplies are mostly being shipped by volunteer pilots.

Residents who have been rescued are being evacuated by these pilots as well, Buxton said. Doctors and nurses are at the Hickory Regional Airport to provide treatment.

Buxton said most of the planes and helicopters are privately owned and pilots are paying for gas out of pocket. Buxton said roughly 60,000 gallons of fuel is being used each day.

Monetary donations to help with fuel costs are being accepted by Operation Airdrop at operation-airdrop.com/hurricane-helene.

Donations are asked to be taken to the Appalachian State University campus in Hickory on U.S. Highway 321.

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Sarah Johnson, 'Lenoir pilot makes emergency landing in Hickory after delivering supplies to Avery County', *Hickory Daily Record* (online), 2 Oct 2024 https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BFA42DB364E7F8



Catawba County Schools to start on a two-hour delay on Thursday

October 2, 2024 | Hickory Daily Record (NC) Author: Miya Banks | Section: Education | 205 Words OpenURL Link

School will resume on a two-hour delay in the Catawba County Schools district on Thursday, according to a Facebook post from the district.

The delay is to allow for safe travel in daylight, the post said.

QUEST will operate on a two-hour delay as well at all sites, the post said.

"We believe the school environment, with access to power, water and food, will be the best place for our students as we work toward getting back to normal," the post said. "We know the lasting impacts of Hurricane Helene are still being felt, but getting back into a routine is important for our students' well-being."

The post said the district understands that some families are still dealing with power outages. Absences due to the impact of Hurricane Helene will be excused for the next two days with a parent note, the post said.

There will be limited phone lines at the schools due to ongoing issues with phone service, the post said. The district asks that parents use ParentSquare to contact the school office.

"For the most part, our bus routes are clear, and we're prepared to transport students safely. If any routes need to be adjusted, your school will be in contact with you directly," the post said.

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'Compassion in action' - Forsyth Humane Society rescues dozens of animals from Asheville

October 2, 2024 | Hickory Daily Record (NC) Author: CONNOR MCNEELY Winston-Salem Journal | Section: Pets | 726 Words OpenURL Link

Julie Long felt relieved when she saw a pack of hounds running down the plane's boarding ramp, barking and wagging their tails.

She had seen the Asheville Humane Society and knew that there was no way any animals could stay in the shelter after the devastation of Hurricane Helene. So the sight of cats and dogs excitedly arriving at a safe place in Forsyth County was a blessing beyond words.

On Monday, the Bissell Pet Foundation delivered 40 dogs and 57 cats from the Asheville Humane Society to the Forsyth Humane Society. Forsyth's Humane Society had also loaded up 1,000 pounds of donated supplies to send for distribution in Asheville.

"Being able to go on the transport last night was really cathartic for me, because having a child there and knowing how bad it is there, it was helpful for me to make a little difference of helping, knowing I can't be there," said Long, a volunteer at the Forsyth Humane Society.

Without electricity and running water, animal shelters in the western part of North Carolina are nearly helpless to care for any dogs, cats, or other small animals.

The flood of water completely swallowed Asheville's Brother Wolf Animal Rescue building after the shelter successfully evacuated its animals into temporary foster homes. At the Asheville Humane Society's headquarters, staff loaded up their animals into crates and sent them to Forsyth County.

The majority of the animals are healthy, but their stress and anxiety are through the roof, said Forsyth Humane Society President Mark Neff. Some of the animals came with a broken leg, hip, or eye infections.

For Neff and his 33-person staff, workdays in the aftermath of Helene now begin early in the morning and end late at night. The Humane Society currently has 210 animals in its care and is expecting hundreds more to arrive by the end of the week.

But despite the heavy workload, Neff believes the Forsyth Humane Society is shouldering the burden of those who have lost everything.

"This is compassion in action. And this isn't just about the animals. It really is about people," Neff said. "The people in these shelters, they're so focused on those animals, all they need to be focused on is themselves and their family and all of their losses."

Residents of Forsyth County have met the Humane Society with their help. The organization has now received over 500 applications for foster care, which helps free up space in the shelter and provide temporary care for animals who have already been flown across the state.

Neff often thinks about the upper limit that his organization can support. He knows that his medical staff can care for about 500 animals, and is thankful for the Forsyth County community, which he says is always ready to embrace animals without homes.

"The thing about animals is they're the innocent victims of this," Neff said. "Animals are completely, 100 percent dependent upon people."

As the animals arrive at the Humane Society, the organization's medical staff check their condition to understand whether they are spayed, neutered, vaccinated and healthy.

After that check, they are ready for adoption and foster care. Neff said that foster care usually entails a 2-4 week period of care for the animal, with variations if it is sick, injured, pregnant or nursing.

While the cats and dogs wait for a new home, volunteers keep them company in their crates and attempt to ease their worries after the chaos of the storm and a bumpy plane ride. Behind the Humane Society building, the organization has a large outdoor garden area with plenty of green space for dogs to run around and play.

Long, who has volunteered with the Humane Society for two years, said that her daughter and son-in-law went back to Asheville so she could work her job at a hospital.

"We had a lot of tears and a lot of 'OK, stop, take a breath,'" Long said.

Long decided to take in her daughters' two dogs, a German shepherd named Kratos, and a Pitbull mix named Luna, after the devastation of the hurricane.

At work, she cares for a number of hounds in the back of the Humane Society building. When she steps into their kennels, a mixed-breed dog named Crouton jumps onto her in a long embrace.

"What a relief," Long said. "We are literally saving that dog or that cat because they can't stay there. There is nowhere for them to stay."

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CONNOR MCNEELY Winston-Salem Journal, "Compassion in action" — Forsyth Humane Society rescues dozens of animals from Asheville', *Hickory Daily Record* (online), 2 Oct 2024 https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view? p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BFA42DBA0E6D40>



People in 4 northwest NC counties eligible for federal disaster unemployment benefits

October 2, 2024 | Hickory Daily Record (NC) Author: RICHARD CRAVER Winston-Salem Journal | Section: Government Politics | 379 Words OpenURL Link

Residents in four northwest North Carolina counties — Alleghany, Ashe, Watauga and Wilkes — have been declared eligible for federal disaster unemployment assistance benefits, the N.C. Division of Employment Security said Tuesday.

The eligibility is a byproduct of the Biden administration's declaration of a state of emergency in North Carolina from the devastating rainfall and flooding caused by the remnants of Hurricane Helene.

The disaster unemployment assistance covers individuals who are unemployed as a direct result of Hurricane Helene. Business owners and self-employed individuals affected by the storm also may qualify for benefits.

Benefits would be made retroactive to Sept. 29 and may last for up to 26 weeks.

There are 21 other counties, along with the Cherokee Indians of N.C., that have been approved: Alexander, Avery, Buncombe, Burke, Caldwell, Catawba, Clay, Cleveland, Gaston, Haywood, Henderson, Jackson, Lincoln, Macon, Madison, McDowell, Mitchell, Polk, Rutherford, Transylvania and Yancey.

The division said additional counties may be added at a later date.

Eligible individuals have until Dec. 2 to file an application for disaster unemployment assistance at des.nc.gov or the DUA Hotline at 919-629-3857.

Individuals must first apply for state unemployment benefits. For those determined to be ineligible for or have exhausted regular state benefits, they may be eligible to make a federal disaster unemployment assistance claim.

Eligibility is determined weekly, and individuals must continue to be out of work as a direct result of the disaster each week to get unemployment benefits.

Those eligible include:

No longer have the job that provided their primary source of income; Are unable to reach their place of unemployment; Cannot work because of an injury caused by the storm; Were unable to begin employment or self-employment due to the storm; and Have become the major supplier of household income due to a storm-related death of the previous major supplier of household income.

Documentation required includes: name and address of all employers you worked with within the last 24 months; county of residence; county of employment; mailing address and ZIP code; valid telephone number; Social Security number or Alien Registration number; proof of employment and income if you're self-employed, a farmer or a commercial fisher.

All required documentation must be submitted within 21 days from the day the application is filed.

DES said it will work with people who cannot provide all documentation to ensure that their unemployment benefits are not delayed.

• Citation (aglc Style)

RICHARD CRAVER Winston-Salem Journal, 'People in 4 northwest NC counties eligible for federal disaster unemployment benefits', *Hickory Daily Record* (online), 2 Oct 2024 https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view? p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BF66E5468C8768>



Helene takes toll on trucking routes

October 2, 2024 | High Point Enterprise (NC) Author: Paul B. Johnson PAXTON MEDIA GROUP | Section: News | 206 Words OpenURL Link

TRIAD — Old Dominion Freight Line Inc. leaders are studying ways to cope with the loss of a major east-west trucking route as Tropical Storm Helene's wrath collapsed a section of Interstate 40 at the North Carolina-Tennessee line.

I-40 is closed in both directions for 43 miles between Exit 432 at U.S. 25-70-411 in Tennessee and Exit 20 at U.S. 276 in North Carolina, according to the N.C. Department of Transportation. Current estimates are that it will take a year to repair and reopen the section of expressway.

"We're still working through a plan at the moment to reroute freight that typically moves through that area," said Patrick Budd, manager of communications for the Thomasville-based national trucking company.

The tropical storm has directly affected Old Dominion because the company has a service center in Arden in the Asheville area.

"Right now, we're thinking of our neighbors, employees and customers in the impacted areas," Budd said.

One alternative route for Old Dominion, other trucking companies and motorists is to take Interstate 81 to Interstate 26 and then back to I-40 in Asheville. Another alternative route is I-81 to Interstate 77 and then to I-40 north of Statesville. But either route would add several hours to the trip.

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Kernersville businesses support Black Mountain relief

October 2, 2024 | High Point Enterprise (NC) Author: Amanda Astillero Staff Reporter | Section: Archives | 786 Words OpenURL Link

Damn-Yankees Deli and Catering, Folly's Draft & Snack, and Social Habit are partnering with Old Sarge's Junk Removal to help support Black Mountain, one of the many places severely damaged by Hurricane Helene.

The businesses will serve as drop-off sites for donations of relief supplies. The supplies should be dropped off by Thursday, Oct. 3.

They are asking for toiletries, bottled water, non-perishable food, and baby supplies such as diapers and formula. They are also seeking cleaning and repair materials, personal hygiene items, and gas cards. A full list of the supplies needed can be found on Damn-Yankees Deli and Catering's Facebook page.

Jed Davis, the owner of Old Sarge's Junk Removal, employee Bruce Smith and the Old Sarge's Junk Removal team will deliver what is collected.

"We're taking goods, fuel, and things of that nature up there. We're taking our vehicles and our trailers as well," Davis said.

Smith organized the effort.

"I work with a group called the United Cajun Navy, out of Louisiana. I worked with them through both Hurricane Florence and Michael. I reached out to them, and they reached back out to me. We concluded that the FEMA and the other organizations are handling Asheville. It's still bad there, but they've got donations coming in and volunteers coming in, to the point that they're turning away volunteers because they're overloaded," Smith said.

Smith said he has always been someone who wants to help.

"I am devoted to helping people. When you have a town that has been completely damaged, it is important to be able to pull together, go see these people and help them get back on their feet, even if it's just somewhere to sleep, or have a warm meal, or even a bottle of water at some point. It's important to help people," he said.

The supplies the team will deliver will include gasoline, he said.

"I am pushing to bring 450 gallons of fuel to get them back up and moving again so they can start clearing roads and keep the volunteers moving because there is no fuel or cell service," Smith said. "The fuel is for the volunteers that are out supplying the food and doing the food drives out in these communities. It will also be used to help supply their vehicles, when you get a vehicle and drive up there, when you get up there and are there for a week, you can't fill your tank with diesel because gas stations are down. I have to make sure that I can keep all of these people moving to get the food and donations out to keep helping," Smith said.

Smith expects to leave Thursday night and stay for a week to help relief efforts.

Steven Maier, the owner of Damn Yankees Deli And Catering, said it is important for businesses to step up and help affected communities.

"It's who we are. We saw Western North Carolina get torn to pieces, and we're over here hanging out like nothing is wrong. We're OK, they're not. Let's do something to help them, that's what businesses should be about," he said.

Mark Stamper, the owner of Folly's Draft & Snack and Social Habit, highlighted the importance of public service from his past experiences.

"I've done a lot of things in my life, and one of them is helping our fellow citizens. I was a rescue fireman for nine years, and during that time, I was an EMT paramedic. At Folly's, we've been accepting stuff that's going to be taken up by some of the business people in town who are driving up there to drop relief supplies off," Stamper said. "It means a lot to get together and help each other. We need to help them because it is not moving fast enough. For us to be able to have multiple businesses and friends get together and give our stuff, that we've worked hard for, to people in the community is important."

In the wake of Hurricane Helene, Smith encourages people to practice compassion, generosity, and empathy.

"I want to tell people to remember and think about what it would be like to be in their situation. To think about if it was their family, or if it was their house was floating down the river and you watched it go by, or when you put your whole life into things and all of a sudden, it's gone in a matter of a day. It's important to remember the little things, and in this world, it's important to be humble." Smith said.

For more information, please visit:

www.facebook.com/p/Damn-Yankees-Deli-and-Catering-61556623787871/or visit Old Sarge's Junk Removal's website and Facebook page.www.facebook.com/Oldsarges/www.oldsargesjunkremoval.com/

Drop off locations are:

Damn-Yankees Deli and Catering is at 234 N. Main St.Folly's- Draft & Snack is at 148 N. Main St.Social Habit is at 242 N. Main St.

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VFW 5352 aids Western NC

October 2, 2024 | High Point Enterprise (NC) Author: Duncan McInnes Staff Reporter | Section: Local | 200 Words OpenURL Link

Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 5352 in Kernersville got a jump start on disaster relief efforts for Western North Carolina in the aftermath of Hurricane Helene, canteen manager Tami Lowrey said.

"We started on Sunday when we opened at 12:30. We just put the word out, and as they say, if you ask they will come. It is great to see the way the community has come together," Lowrey said. "A lot of local businesses and individuals have come in and made donations. We had a truck with donations that made it through to Black Mountain on Sunday, and we sent a tractor-trailer full of donations out on Monday."

Helene is now the second-deadliest hurricane to strike the mainland U.S. in the last 55 years, topped only by Hurricane Katrina in 2005, and the most deadly since Hurricane Camille hit the Gulf Coast in August 1969. As of Wednesday morning, more than 70 people were confirmed dead in North Carolina — with dozens of those in Buncombe County, which is home to the city of Asheville — and a total of more than 150 in the Southeast.

Federal officials estimate the financial damage nationwide from the hurricane will be over \$35 billion.

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Villains hold off Carver 14-6

October 2, 2024 | High Point Enterprise (NC) Author: Duncan McInnes Staff Reporter | Section: Sports | 255 Words OpenURL Link

Good defense and a couple of big plays helped the Bishop McGuinness varsity football team defeat visiting Northwest Piedmont 1-A conference rival Carver 14-6 on Monday night. The game was originally scheduled for Friday night but was moved to Monday due to expected heavy wind and rain from the remnants of Hurricane Helene.

"I thought our defense played well and they made some big plays," Villains Head Coach Mark Holcomb said.

"Offensively, we were our own worst enemy. We had offsides and false starts. One drive it was first down on their 40-yard line. We hadn't snapped it yet, and it was first and 20. We had a turnover on their two-yard line at the end of the first quarter. But I am happy to be 4-1. I am not going to complain about it. With us not playing on Friday obviously you have to change your routine, but I just told them after the game I was happy to be 4-1."

Bishop took a 6-0 lead in the first quarter when quarterback Alex Waterfield caught Nicholas Graves in stride on a pass that ended up a as a 73-yard touchdown. Graves returned an interception 35 yards for a touchdown in the second quarter. Later in the second quarter, a snap sailed over the Carver quarterback's head and he kicked it out of the end zone for a safety before the Villains could recover it in the end zone for a touchdown.

Bishop McGuinness will host undefeated Corvian Community School (5-0) on Friday night at 7 p.m.

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Raiders claim 21-6 win over Bobcats

October 2, 2024 | High Point Enterprise (NC) Author: Duncan McInnes Staff Reporter | Section: Sports | 516 Words OpenURL Link

Some turnovers by the Bobcats and solid defense from visiting Reagan helped Reagan claim a 21-6 Central Piedmont 4-A conference win over Glenn on Saturday afternoon. The game was moved from Friday night due to expected heavy rain and wind from the remnants of Hurricane Helene.

In a game that did not have many big plays, the Raiders came up with more than Glenn and led 14-0 at halftime and 21-6 at the end of the third quarter. The Raiders scored on a 13-yard touchdown pass and a short touchdown pass from Brenner Pridgeon later in the second quarter. A long touchdown pass from Pridgeon and an extra point pushed the lead to 21-6 at the end of the third quarter.

The Bobcats were hampered by three interceptions and one big play on special teams that extended a Reagan drive that ended up with a touchdown, Bobcats Head Coach Tommy Green said.

"I would say we got away from our game plan. The fact that we were down 14-0 at halftime, we were playing catchup most of the game, which caused us to be more comfortable with the pass than the run. I like to keep things balanced. It was 21-0 before we scored, so we could never establish the run they way we wanted to," Green said. "The defense did OK. We had an interception, and we forced one fumble. But on the flip side, we gave up some explosive plays. For us, that is anything over 20 yards, and that was the run of the game. We also had a running into the kicker penalty, and that allowed them to score."

Glenn's Joel Hayes had four catches for 75 yards and caught a seven-yard touchdown pass from Brady Robinson. Defensively, Isaiah Bruford had a big game with nine solo tackles and five assists on tackles.

Reagan limited the Bobcats to only 17 yards rushing in the game.

The Raiders were coming off lopsided losses to Grimsley and East Forsyth, both of whom are considered threats to win the Class 4-A title.

"They (Reagan) lost their starting quarterback two weeks ago, and they had started 2-0. Then they played Grimsley, who is one of the best teams in the state, and then East Forsyth, who is also one of the toughest teams in the state. They are running the ball well, and defensively they are doing their job managing the game," Green said.

The Bobcats (2-3, 0-2 CP 4-A) will try to get their first conference win of the season when they host West Forsyth (3-2, 1-1 CP 4-A). The Titans' two losses are to conference rival Mount Tabor and Weddington, who is currently the No. 1 ranked team in the state.

"We have to play mistake-free, that is first and foremost. We have to take care of the football, and the special teams is also a factor. Defensively, we have to make teams drive the football and stop explosive plays," Green said. "We have to get off the field on third down and be more balanced on the offensive side. We just have to play our brand of football and be clean."

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