

These Triangle-area school districts are closing Friday due to Hurricane Helene

September 26, 2024 | News & Observer, The: Web Edition Articles (Raleigh, NC) Author: Mary Helen Moore, News & Observer | Section: weather news | 286 Words OpenURL Link

Public school districts across North Carolina are canceling school ahead of flooding expected to accompany Hurricane Helene's arrival.

All public schools in the Triangle will be closed to students and staff Friday, according to announcements posted Thursday evening.

Some colleges are also canceled classes.

What school districts are closed

« Wake County public schools will be closed for students and staff, the district announced around 7:30 p.m. All extracurricular activities for Friday are canceled.

No makeup days will be needed, since banked instructional time will be used.

« Durham Public Schools made the announcement shortly before 5 p.m., "out of an abundance of caution due to potentially hazardous weather conditions stemming from Hurricane Helene."

There is no remote learning Friday and all sporting events are being rescheduled.

"Essential personnel should speak directly with their supervisor for specific storm-related plans," DPS spokesperson Crystal Kimpson Roberts said. "A make-up day will be determined at a later date."

« Orange County Schools sent an announcement to families around the same time.

"Current conditions and the outlook for sustained rain and winds on Friday create the potential for dangerous weather, flash flooding, property damage, and power outages," OCS spokesperson Kevin Smith said.

« Friday was already a teacher workday for Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools, but staff are directed to work from home instead.

Athletic events and student activities are being postponed.

- « Chatham County Schools will be closed for students and staff on Friday.
- « Johnston County Public Schools will be have a remote learning day. After-school activities are canceled.

What colleges are closed

- « Wake Tech is closing all its campuses Friday and canceling classes typically held in-person. Online classes will continue as scheduled.
- « Durham Tech is also closed, and staff will hold classes remotely.

Photos: Hurricane Helene begins to pound the Southeast US

• Citation (aglc Style)

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Hurricane Helene made landfall as a Category 4 storm. What that means for the Triangle

September 26, 2024 | News & Observer, The: Web Edition Articles (Raleigh, NC) Author: Renee Umsted and Adam Wagner, News & Observer | Section: weather news | 1771 Words OpenURL Link

For the latest on Tropical Storm Helene on Friday, Sept. 27, see this story.

The eye of Hurricane Helene started moving ashore along the Florida coast Thursday night, bringing "catastrophic winds" - what the National Hurricane Center called a "life-threatening situation."

The storm is expected to bring dangerous wind gusts, flash flooding and power outages to central North Carolina, the National Weather Service said in its 6 p.m. briefing. The rain band also could produce tornadoes, the weather service's Raleigh office said.

School districts in the Triangle canceled classes for teachers and staff Friday in anticipation of the severe weather.

The storm was named a Category 3 hurricane in the afternoon of Sept. 26, with sustained winds of up to 120 mph.

Hurricane and tropical storm warnings are in place for portions of Florida. A storm surge could reach as high as 20 feet above ground level along parts of the Florida Big Bend Coast, the NHC said in a report early in the morning Sept. 26.

In central North Carolina, the weather service said the worst of the weather will move through the area by 2 to 3 p.m. Friday.

More rain for NC mountains

Parts of the southeastern U.S. continue to receive rain ahead of the storm. Asheville, North Carolina, for example, is expected to receive several inches of rain Sept. 26.

Gov. Roy Cooper issued a state of emergency for North Carolina on Wednesday, Sept. 25, in response to Helene's predicted impacts on the state.

During the morning Sept. 26 ahead of Helene's arrival, Cooper called Helene "an unusually dangerous storm."

Cooper warned of heavy rains that could cause flooding, debris flow and landslides in parts of Western North Carolina.

Helene is expected to bring 9 to 14 inches of rainfall to Western North Carolina, with more than 20 inches possible in some locations, N.C. Emergency Management Director Will Ray said. Those are expected to cause "significant flash flooding" starting Thursday evening.

Ray also warned that Central and Eastern North Carolina could see impacts from the storm. Places like Asheville and Charlotte need to be prepared for flash flooding, Cooper said.

"If you do not need to travel, please stay off the roadways, especially in the foothills and the mountains. Do not drive through floodwaters. We have lost too many North Carolinians who have driven around barricades and into floodwaters," Cooper said.

North Carolina has activated 175 soldiers and airmen from the N.C. National Guard and deployed 16 of the state's swift water rescue teams, with teams also coming from Illinois, Indiana and New York.

"This storm path is wide, and its impacts will be felt far from the center of the storm," Cooper said.

Emergency shelters are open in Hendersonville, Marion and Swannoa.

Thursday, President Joe Biden approved an emergency declaration for North Carolina. That allows the Federal Emergency Management Agency to help fund emergency protective measures in much of Western North Carolina, including evacuations and emergency shelters.

NC Gov Cooper: Helene threatens to bring catastrophic rain to stateDuring an NC Emergency Briefing on Thursday, Gov. Roy Cooper said that "Helene threatens heavy rain, flash flooding, landslides, and damaging winds to the mountains and Piedmont areas of our state."

Prep for a potentially 'devastating' hurricane

Several sources have been encouraging people in the Southeast to prepare in the days leading up to the storm's arrival and respond accordingly to possible forthcoming evacuation orders. A NHC advisory shared around 2 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 25, warned of "life-threatening storm surge" and "devastating hurricane-force winds." The Weather Channel's Jim Cantore wrote in a tweet Sept. 25 that the threat of Helene "cannot be understated" for the region.

"Because of the shape of the coast, which can trap excess water in the Big Bend area of northern Florida, and the forecast intensity and track of Helene, AccuWeather meteorologists anticipate a storm surge up to the height of a two-story building, or 15-20 feet, Thursday night," according to an AccuWeather report. "At this height, some single-story buildings along the coast may be completely underwater."

Mandatory and voluntary evacuation orders have been issued for many counties along the Florida coastline, as of the morning of Sept. 26.

While the storm is expected to weaken after it hits land, its "fast forward speed will allow strong, damaging winds, especially in gusts" across the Southeast, the NHC said early Sept. 26.

In the Carolinas, the Greenville-Spartnburg NWS office released a flash flood warning late Thursday saying that major rainfall could lead to evacuations and rescues across Western North Carolina and in Upstate South Carolina. Flooding could leave some buildings uninhabitable or wash them away, meteorologists warned, with streets and parking lots becoming like rivers.

"Small streams, creeks, canals, arroyos, and ditches may become dangerous rivers. In mountain areas, destructive runoff may run quickly down valleys while increasing susceptibility to rockslides and mudslides," the warning said.

Helene-impact-sept26.jpgHurricane Helene is expected to bring strong winds and rain to parts of the Southeast.

How and when will Hurricane Helene's effects be felt in Raleigh and central NC?

Ahead of Helene's arrival, the Triangle is forecast to experience light rain and embedded storms on Sept. 26, especially after mid-day, said Nick Luchetti, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service Forecast Office in Raleigh.

Parts of the Triangle have received 4 to 7 inches of rain over the past seven days.

The center of Hurricane Helene isn't expected to reach western North Carolina until Friday, Sept. 27.

It will bring rain and strong winds throughout the state, with the most severe weather focused in the western part of North Carolina.

In the Triangle, residents should expect about 1 to 3 inches of rain from the storm, with most of it coming Friday, Sept. 27, especially between the morning and mid-to-late afternoon.

Heavier downpours that could occur as a main band of the storm pushes through the area could result in flash flooding, especially in urban areas.

Starting the morning of Sept. 27, parts of the Triangle could also see sustained winds of 15 to 25 mph, with gusts of up to 30 to 40 mph, Luchetti said. Stronger winds may cause power outages.

Isolated tornadoes are also possible between 5 a.m. and 3 p.m. Friday as the main band of the storm comes through the Triangle on Sept. 27.

Some rivers that flow through the Triangle may flood, especially in days after the storm passes through North Carolina.

Past storms in Western NC

In August 2021, Tropical Storm Fred followed a heavy rainfall in Western North Carolina by dropping 5 to 10 inches of rain on already saturated ground and swollen waterways.

At one point, the Pigeon River near Cruso rose more than 2.5 feet in 30 minutes. Flooding hit that Haywood County town especially hard, along with nearby Bethel and Canton, the Charlotte Observer previously reported.

Fred caused six deaths across Western North Carolina, while also destroying more than 50 homes and causing major damage to more than 200 additional homes, according to a FEMA damage assessment.

Ray, NC's emergency management director, pointed further back. to the twin impacts the remnants of Hurricanes Frances and Ivan had in North Carolina's mountains in 2004. Frances brought more than 23 inches of rain to Mount Mitchell over a four-day period, while Ivan's heaviest rainfall a week later was measured at about 17 inches at Cruso.

"As we look at potential rainfall amounts and a potential threat picture, Frances and Ivan are also some of the reference points that we have. And so I don't think we can overstate some of our concern about potential impact in that area of the state," Ray said.

Late Thursday, Canton Mayor Zeb Smathers said the town and Haywood County officials had done everything they could to prepare since Sunday, taking advantage of days to prepare where Fred had only given them hours. Businesses in the floodplain had been urged to move inventory to higher ground and sandbags had been filled to try to keep water out.

As the storm drew nearer, Smathers was also thinking about how many of the businesses, homes and places that were preparing this week were the same he had visited in the aftermath of Fred. The damage from that storm, he said, was supposed to come once in a lifetime, and now the forecast was threatening a second disaster in a little more than three years.

For example, Smathers was preparing for the possibility that the football field at Pisgah Memorial Stadium, which was destroyed during Fred, would likely be lost again.

"It's not lost on me and my community that a town that is roughly 3,000 feet above sea level and hundreds of miles away from the coast will now be impacted in three years with more tropical-related storms than many of our coastal towns," Smathers said. "That is something we need to discuss, because that is not normal."

Smathers was also thinking about the rest of Western North Carolina, worrying that the heavy rains could bring

floodwaters to places that haven't spent the last three years clearing debris from their rivers and considering how to strengthen themselves against floodwaters.

"We are getting ready to get hit with a very, very demonic storm. But so is the rest of the region, and what I worry about is there are a lot of places that are not as prepared as us because they didn't go through Fred," Smathers said as he drove along the Pigeon River.

The National Water Prediction Service was predicting Thursday afternoon that the Swannanoa River at Biltmore would crest 2 p.m. Friday at 21 feet.

That's higher than Asheville's historic flood of 1916 and, according to the service, is likely to cause "devastating flooding of the Swannanoa Valley" if reached.

The French Broad River was expected to reach major flood stage in Asheville on Friday, peaking at 21 feet.

Dwonstream, near Fletcher in Henderson County, the Water Prediction Service is forecasting the French Broad will peak at 30.50 feet at 8 p.m. Friday, shattering the 20.13-foot record set by Frances for a gauge that has been in place since July 2021.

"We're seeing areas flood we've never seen flood before. A lot of folks may have lived through Frances and Ivan in 2004, we're seeing floodwaters that exceed those levels,"Jimmy Brissie, Henderson County's emergency services director said during a Thursday afternoon briefing.

Thursday, Buncombe County warned that people in Fletcher and Biltmore Village should voluntarily evacuate.

"If you are in an impacted area, you should leave now. It's possible we may get to a point where our crews will not physically be able to perform rescues. We cannot emphasize how much you should take this seriously," Buncombe County Emergency Services Director Taylor Jones said in a statement.

Ask NC service journalism team EMBED

It's hurricane season. Should you buy a generator for power outages? Here's how to decide

Do you have the emergency supplies you need for an NC hurricane? Here's a checklist

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Watch western NC rivers on live web cams as Helene moves through the state

September 26, 2024 | News & Observer, The: Web Edition Articles (Raleigh, NC) Author: Martha Quillin, News & Observer | Section: weather news | 142 Words OpenURL Link

It isn't safe to travel to the North Carolina mountains with Hurricane Helene's rains pouring down, but you can see the water rising and rushing down various rivers as possibly historic flooding occurs. Here are some live river cams showing the flooding in real time.

Note that webcams may be down occasionally due to severe weather in those areas.

French Broad River

« French Broad River at Asheville, NC, USGS webcam

This camera shows the French Broad River in Asheville.

Lake Lure

« Rumbling Bald Resort, Lake Lure, NC live webcam

This camera shows Lake Lure from the lakefront Rumbling Bald Resort.

Rocky Broad River

« Chimney Rock State Park live webcam

This river runs through Hickory Nut Gorge in Chimney Rock State Park. The Park's web cam has been working intermittently. One view shows the river.

NC residents can use this real-time tool to search where stream flooding is likely

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Martha Quillin, News & Observer, 'Watch western NC rivers on live web cams as Helene moves through the state', *News & Observer, The: Web Edition Articles* (online), 26 Sep 2024 https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view? p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BD7E27C6943440>



Historic flooding predicted in Burke County; Lake James may reach record highs

September 26, 2024 | News Herald, The (Morganton, NC) Author: Sharon McBrayer | Section: Government Politics | 409 Words OpenURL Link

Lake James is expected to reach historic water levels on Friday and residents in the area should prepare for flooding from Hurricane Helene, Duke Energy officials said on Thursday.

Burke County government officials are also warning of potential historic flooding, saying emergency teams have already evacuated families in the Linville area.

Duke Energy manages the dams and lakes in the Catawba River basin. Officials said Lake James is expected to be 10 feet above what is considered a full pond.

"This would be the highest lake level ever reached at Lake James," Duke Energy said in a news release. "Lake residents should prepare for flooding conditions and closely monitor lake levels. We urge people living along lakes and rivers or in flood-prone areas to use caution, follow directions from emergency managers, pay close attention to changing weather and streamflow conditions and stay informed."

In a release 4:30 p.m. update Thursday, Burke County said is expecting 12 to 14 inches of rain from 10 p.m. Thursday to Friday morning. Winds gusts are expected to reach 60 mph and with sustained winds of 30 mph, the county said. Conditions are expected to be worse than previous storms such as Hurricanes Ivan and Frances.

With heavy rain and sustained winds expected Thursday night and Friday, Burke County said models are being built to help with further evacuations in areas at risk of dam overflow or road blockages. Residents near the Catawba River should expect flooding in Morganton, with road closings possible on Thursday.

The county says while wind damage is a concern, the primary threat is water. Burke County Emergency Management Director Mike Willis said he has significant concern over potential flooding, particularly around the Bridgewater, Rhodhiss and Lookout Shoals dams. All those areas are expected to flood and are being constantly monitored, the county release said.

The release said Duke Energy is reporting rain projections of 6-10 inches. Oxford Dam is operating at full gate capacity, the release said.

The Burke release said all county essential functions will remain operational, but solid waste convenience sites and the county landfill closed at noon Thursday and will remain closed through Friday. The convenience sites and landfill will reopen for normal business hours on Saturday, the county said.

Seeking shelter?

Burke County plans to open a shelter at Oak Hill United Methodist Church at 8 p.m. on Thursday. The shelter's address is 2239 N.C. Hwy. 181, Morganton. The shelter is available for residents during the storm, a news release from the county said.

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CCS announces early dismissal Thursday due to Hurricane Helene

September 26, 2024 | News-Topic, The (Lenoir, NC) Author: STAFF REPORTS | Section: Archives | 108 Words OpenURL Link

CALDWELL COUNTY — Caldwell County Schools announced in an email Wednesday evening that there will be an early dismissal Thursday and no school Friday, due to weather from Hurricane Helene.

The announcement read:

"In response to the forecasted severe weather conditions, including high winds and heavy rain expected to impact our area, Caldwell County Schools will implement a three-hour early release for all schools tomorrow, September 26, 2024. Additionally, there will be no school for students or staff on Friday, September 27, 2024. The safety and well-being of our students and staff are our top priorities. We encourage parents and guardians to make necessary arrangements for early pick-up tomorrow."

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• Citation (aglc Style)

STAFF REPORTS, 'CCS announces early dismissal Thursday due to Hurricane Helene', *News-Topic, The* (online), 26 Sep 2024 https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BD71C8CE566CE8



NC Urged to Prepare for Impacts from Hurricane Helene

September 26, 2024 | Pilot, The (Southern Pines, NC) Author: Staff Report | Section: News | 578 Words OpenURL Link

People are urged to prepare for Hurricane Helene as rains associated with Helene have started impacting western North Carolina before the full force of the storm is forecast to arrive in western and central North Carolina.

From Thursday night through Friday, Helene is expected to bring to North Carolina flash flooding, downed trees and landslides in higher elevations and isolated tornadoes. The storm's impacts could create treacherous travel conditions and power outages in the mountains and much of the Piedmont.

As of 1 p.m. Thursday, heavy rains associated with Helene had resulted in 97 road closures in western North Carolina.

"Our agency is gearing up for a large storm," state Transportation Secretary Joey Hopkins said. "But we want our citizens to take this storm seriously too by being ready, keeping a close eye on the weather and planning accordingly as Helene is expected to bring widespread impacts to North Carolina."

The N.C. Department of Transportation is encouraging people to postpone unnecessary travel during the storm and use DriveNC.gov to check for real-time road conditions. Transportation officials say to never drive through flooded roads or around barricades and road closure signs. It's against the law, according to a news release.

People can also use ReadyNC.gov for emergency preparedness tips and tools.

Statewide, DOT crews are readying equipment, reviewing inventories and staff for possible road clearing efforts, shoulder repairs and possible crossline pipe replacements.

More than 2,000 employees statewide are prepared to respond from the mountains to the coast with over 1,300 chainsaws, 180 graders, 350 backhoes and front-end loaders and 1,300 dump trucks. NCDOT has been fueling up and testing equipment and vehicles before the storm's arrival.

Agency crews also have thousands of road closure and high-water signs and barricades ready to put in place on flooded, blocked or damaged roads and bridges.

NCDOT staff have also driven the main highways looking for any weather-related problems that may need the agency's attention. They checked known trouble spots, such as low-lying areas and roads without drainage systems, and made sure culverts and ditches were not clogged or overgrown with weeds to help lessen any stormwater backup that may occur during the storm.

In some areas, crews have staged equipment so it can be available once cleanup and recovery begins. Generators have been checked and readied, and traffic services offices have staged message boards.

NCDOT staff have also made arrangements to shift personnel to areas of greatest need and have contractors on standby to respond to any storm-related tasks such as cutting and removing downed trees from roads.

The agency is using its flood warning system to prepare for and respond to the storm. The system includes about 600 gauges and has storm surge prediction capabilities that enable the agency to make informed decisions to protect the traveling public.

The N.C. Division of Motor Vehicles is tracking the storm and will make any adjustments to services as needed.

Already Thursday, a dozen driver license offices have suspended road skills testing for today due to inclement weather in the area.

Driver license offices will remain open as conditions remain safe for customers and staff. Any appointments at those offices that may have to be canceled will be rescheduled at a time convenient for the customer.

Three western North Carolina license plate agencies, which are independently owned and operated, have closed due to the rain. Others may choose to adjust their operating schedules depending on the storm's impacts.

Right now, all NC By Train passenger trains remain in operation, but people should visit Amtrak.com for the latest schedules.

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Watches Issued as Effects of Helene Pick Up

September 26, 2024 | Pilot, The (Southern Pines, NC) Author: Staff Report | Section: News | 667 Words OpenURL Link

Virtually all of North Carolina remains under some form of hazardous weather watch, and Moore County is under a flood watch, tornado watch and wind advisory as the remnants of Hurricane Helene continue their northwestern movement.

Helene came ashore Thursday night in the Big Bend portion of Florida as a Category 4 hurricane and quickened its progress northward into Georgia before taking a northwesterly turn.

The North Carolina mountains are expected to see the most significant impacts, with flooding rains and damaging winds.

In Moore County, virtually all school and child care options were closed Friday, and many events for Friday are canceled or postponed.

The county remains under several weather watches until 6 p.m. Friday evening, including cautions that include a tornado watch, flood watch and high wind advisory. A watch means conditions are favorable for extreme conditions; a tornado warning or flood warning means that condition is imminent.

Residents can expect rain showers off and on for most of Friday, with winds gusting as high as 47 mph.

Through Friday evening, Helene is expected to bring to North Carolina flash flooding, downed trees and landslides in higher elevations and isolated tornadoes. The storm's impacts could create treacherous travel conditions and power outages in the mountains and much of the Piedmont.

"Our agency is gearing up for a large storm," state Transportation Secretary Joey Hopkins said. "But we want our citizens to take this storm seriously too by being ready, keeping a close eye on the weather and planning accordingly as Helene is expected to bring widespread impacts to North Carolina."

The N.C. Department of Transportation is encouraging people to postpone unnecessary travel during the storm and use DriveNC.gov to check for real-time road conditions. Transportation officials say to never drive through flooded roads or around barricades and road closure signs. It's against the law, according to a news release.

People can also use ReadyNC.gov for emergency preparedness tips and tools.

Statewide, DOT crews are readying equipment, reviewing inventories and staff for possible road clearing efforts, shoulder repairs and possible crossline pipe replacements.

More than 2,000 employees statewide are prepared to respond from the mountains to the coast with over 1,300 chainsaws, 180 graders, 350 backhoes and front-end loaders and 1,300 dump trucks. NCDOT has been fueling up and testing equipment and vehicles before the storm's arrival.

Agency crews also have thousands of road closure and high-water signs and barricades ready to put in place on flooded, blocked or damaged roads and bridges.

NCDOT staff have also driven the main highways looking for any weather-related problems that may need the agency's attention. They checked known trouble spots, such as low-lying areas and roads without drainage systems, and made sure culverts and ditches were not clogged or overgrown with weeds to help lessen any

stormwater backup that may occur during the storm.

In some areas, crews have staged equipment so it can be available once cleanup and recovery begins. Generators have been checked and readied, and traffic services offices have staged message boards.

NCDOT staff have also made arrangements to shift personnel to areas of greatest need and have contractors on standby to respond to any storm-related tasks such as cutting and removing downed trees from roads.

The agency is using its flood warning system to prepare for and respond to the storm. The system includes about 600 gauges and has storm surge prediction capabilities that enable the agency to make informed decisions to protect the traveling public.

The N.C. Division of Motor Vehicles is tracking the storm and will make any adjustments to services as needed. Already Thursday, a dozen driver license offices have suspended road skills testing for today due to inclement weather in the area.

Driver license offices will remain open as conditions remain safe for customers and staff. Any appointments at those offices that may have to be canceled will be rescheduled at a time convenient for the customer.

Three western North Carolina license plate agencies, which are independently owned and operated, have closed due to the rain. Others may choose to adjust their operating schedules depending on the storm's impacts.

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PSRC moves to remote learning for Friday due to inclement weather

September 26, 2024 | Robesonian, The (Lumberton, NC) Author: Staff report| Section: news | 76 Words OpenURL Link

LUMBERTON — The Public Schools of Robeson County will move to a remote instruction day on Friday due to inclement weather conditions resulting from remnants of Hurricane Helene.

Teachers will work with students in Canvas or other acceptable means to ensure assignments are completed, the district says.

Friday will be a work from home day for staff members. PSRC asks students, teachers and the community to continue to monitor weather conditions in your area and stay safe.

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Staff report, 'PSRC moves to remote learning for Friday due to inclement weather', *Robesonian, The* (online), 26 Sep 2024 https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BD7638B3F14590



Cape Fear storms past Rams

September 26, 2024 | Robesonian, The (Lumberton, NC) Author: Zack Ciboth Special to The Robesonian | Section: sports | 357 Words OpenURL Link

FAYETTEVILLE — The Purnell Swett Rams football team fell Thursday evening in United-8 conference play when they traveled to Cape Fear for a matchup against the Colts, as the hosts jumped on the Rams early and cruised to a 38-0 win. The game was moved up to Thursday due to incoming weather from Hurricane Helene.

The Colts (5-0, 2-0 United-8) wasted no time finding the end zone early in the game, driving down the field and completing the offensive drive with a 24-yard rushing touchdown from King Faison to make it 7-0. Cape Fear closed the first quarter with their second rushing touchdown of the game, this time from Tai Phillips for a 9-yard score to put the Colts up 14-0.

Although the Rams couldn't get anything going on offense, they managed to slow down the hot start that the Colts had going allowing just three points in the second quarter that came on a 33-yard field goal from Francisco Rodriguez to make it 17-0 heading into the locker room.

The Colts' 17 first-half points matched the team's lowest first-half output this season.

"The weather, kind of, you know it is what it is, can't complain about that," Purnell Swett coach Josh Deese said.

"First half, we played pretty good football. I think this team (Cape Fear) is going to contest Seventy-First for the conference title so don't take anything away from them they came to play as well."

Late in the third quarter the Colts continued to add to their lead with a rushing touchdown from Faison from 14 yards out for his second touchdown of the night to make it 24-0. The next offensive possession, Phillips punched his second touchdown of the game in at the goal line to make it 31-0.

The defense finished off the Colts' scoring by jumping on a ball that rolled in the end zone off a bad snap from Purnell Swett's offense to make it 38-0.

The Rams were held to 87 yards of total offense. Raymond Cummings rushed for 45 yards on seven attempts and was 4-for-7 passing.

The Rams will now get ready for next Friday when they host Jack Britt at 7:30 p.m.

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• Citation (aglc Style)

Zack Ciboth Special to The Robesonian, 'Cape Fear storms past Rams', *Robesonian, The* (online), 26 Sep 2024 https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BD8B5BD8300828



Lee County Schools closed for students Friday

September 26, 2024 | Sanford Herald, The (NC) Author: Staff Writer | Section: News | 32 Words OpenURL Link

Lee County Schools announced in a release Thursday afternoon that schools will be closed to students Friday, due to expected effects from Hurricane Helene. It is an optional work day for teachers.

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• Citation (aglc Style)

Staff Writer, 'Lee County Schools closed for students Friday', *Sanford Herald, The* (online), 26 Sep 2024 https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BDA7B4686673F8



Be prepared in the case of flash floods - Our Opinion

September 26, 2024 | Smoky Mountain Times (Bryson City, NC) Section: Opinions | 292 Words

Page: 5A OpenURL Link

Swain County is in a flash flood watch (from Wednesday morning) through Friday afternoon as Tropical Storm Helene passes through the mountains, according to the National Weather Service.

Flash flooding caused by excessive rainfall is possible as is the potential for excessive runoff that could cause landslides or rockslides. The region is anticipated to get 8-12 inches along the Blue Ridge Escarpment and 5-8 inches across the rest of the region. There is also a potential for high winds and power outages.

ReadyNC.gov has a page dedicated to flood precautions and warns state residents that even just a few inches of water can be enough to knock a person over or sweep a car away. The best precaution is to avoid areas where streams and rivers are flooding and to never drive through flooded roadways.

Ready NC offers the following tips to prepare for a flood: Build an emergency kit. Make a family communications plan.

Do not build in a floodplain unless you raise it up and support your home.

Raise up the furnace, water heater and electric panel in your home if you live in a high flood risk area.

Think about putting in "check valves" to prevent flood water from backing up into the drains of your home.

If you can, build barriers to stop floodwater from entering the building. Seal walls in basements with waterproofing compounds.

Swain County residents are encouraged to enroll in the Code Red Weather Warning system, which can be done by visiting the county website, swaincountync.gov and clicking on the Code Red Weather Warning link. To report a power outage to Duke Energy, call 800-POWERON (800-769-3766) or download the Duke Energy mobile app and report an outage through your account.

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'Be prepared in the case of flash floods - Our Opinion', *Smoky Mountain Times* (online), 26 Sep 2024 5A https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BD518D625EBC90



Cleveland County prepares for arrival of Tropical Storm Helene

September 26, 2024 | Star, The (Shelby, NC) Author: Rebecca Sitzes; Shelby Star | Section: News | 306 Words Page: A1 OpenURL Link

Cleveland County is hunkering down in preparation for Tropical Storm Helene.

Residents are cautioned to be prepared for power outages and flooding in low lying areas.

Tropical Storm Helene was forecasted to strengthen to hurricane status with strong winds and rain along the Gulf Coast starting Thursday before heading north toward the Carolinas within 24 hours of making landfall.

The threat of storms delayed football games and could alter plans for the Cleveland County Fair, which is set to kick off Thursday night with a special opening ceremony to celebrate its 100th year.

Bobby Jenks, fair manager, said they are playing the wait and see game before making any decisions to delay events.

"I don't want to say one thing or another," he said. "We really got to wait and see."

He said he's not sure when they will make that call.

Doug Outlaw, meteorologist with the National Weather Service, said Cleveland County can expect to see total rainfall of 4.5 to 5 inches over the course of the storm with most of it falling late Thursday night and into Friday morning. He said wind speeds will increase throughout the day Thursday with the strongest gusts predicted to be up to 45 miles per hour early Friday morning.

Outlaw said wind is expected to decrease by 8 a.m. Friday.

"There is a possibility of power outages because of saturated ground and wind speeds late Thursday night through Friday morning," he said. "Trees could be coming down with those wind gusts, and people need to be prepared for power outages on Friday."

He said people need to make sure phones are fully charged, and they have workable flashlights. He said people in flood prone areas need to be very watchful.

Cleveland County Schools is already scheduled to have a half day Thursday for parent teacher conferences, and there is no school Friday due to a planning day.

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• Citation (aglc Style)

Rebecca Sitzes, Shelby Star, 'Cleveland County prepares for arrival of Tropical Storm Helene', *Star, The* (online), 26 Sep 2024 A1 https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BD4C154A378A20



Hurricane Helene brings wind, rain to Wilmington, historic flooding to Western NC

September 26, 2024 | StarNews (Wilmington, NC)
Author: Sherry Jones and Gareth McGrath, Wilmington StarNews | Section: News | 297 Words
OpenURL Link

(This story was updated to add new information.)

Helene, which was downgraded to a tropical depression Friday afternoon, brought gusty winds and occasionally heavy rain bands to the Cape Fear region. But those had mostly cleared out by Friday afternoon, although some gusts remained amid the gloomy skies and humid weather. Helene also caused some sporadic power outages across the region.

The western part of North Carolina, however, is experiencing major impacts from the storm. Helene has brought significant rainfall, strong winds, damaging debris flows and riverine flooding, according to a news release from the Governor's Office. The area has seen more than a foot of rain, with widespread power outages and life-threatening flash flooding across the mountains.

"For western North Carolina, do not travel unless there is an emergency," Gov. Roy Cooper said in the news release. "Because conditions are worsening, people in western North Carolina should consider all roads closed unless you are seeking higher ground. I urge people to stay informed and listen to local emergency response officials."

Hurricane Helene: Updates from Western North Carolina

TRACK THE STORM: See the latest path for Hurricane Helene

As of 2 p.m., Helene was located about 125 miles south-southeast of Louisville, Kentucky. The tropical depression was packing sustained winds of 35 mph and moving at a fast 28 mph clip north-northwest toward central Kentucky.

More than 359 North Carolina roads have been reported closed in Western North Carolina and the NC Department of Transportation is working to respond to closures and damage.

All roads in Western North Carolina should be considered closed, according to the news release from the Governor's Office.

"Unless you are seeking higher ground, motorists should not travel in this area. People should not attempt to drive through standing water and must respect barricades and road closure signs," the news release said.

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• Citation (aglc Style)

Sherry Jones and Gareth McGrath, Wilmington StarNews, 'Hurricane Helene brings wind, rain to Wilmington, historic flooding to Western NC', *StarNews* (online), 26 Sep 2024 https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view? p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BD7687CD451458>



In advance of Helene, Brunswick County Schools closed Friday; New Hanover goes remote

September 26, 2024 | StarNews (Wilmington, NC) Author: Owen Hassell, Wilmington StarNews | Section: News | 348 Words OpenURL Link

(This story was updated to accurately reflect the most current information.)

While major impacts from Hurricane Helene are not expected in the Wilmington area, three local school districts are already preparing for a second storm in less than two weeks.

With rain and wind gusts slated to begin Thursday night, Brunswick County Schools announced its schools and buildings will be closed Friday and will be a nonrequired workday for staff, according to the district's website.

Originally set to have a two-hour delay Friday, New Hanover County Schools announced early Friday morning that it would instead be a remote learning day.

On Thursday morning, Pender County Schools said it will transition to remote learning on Friday, according to a news release.

More on the storm: Helene is now a strengthening hurricane. Here's what it could mean for Wilmington

Brunswick will have an instructional day for students and staff on Monday, Oct. 21, which was previously deemed a teacher workday.

Cape Fear Academy is also closed Friday, according to a news release from the school.

As for area colleges, Brunswick Community College will be closed Friday with classes taking place remotely where possible, according to a news release Thursday. Events scheduled after noon on Friday at Odell Williamson Auditorium will take place as scheduled. The school will reopen Saturday.

It's been less than 10 days since an unnamed storm, also called Potential Tropical Cyclone 8, brought 20 inches of rain to much of Brunswick and southern New Hanover counties, damaging homes and flooding out several roads. Some of them remain washed out.

Even with projections of 2-4 inches of rain from Helene, officials are worried about any precipitation adding to already swollen creeks and rivers and the harm it could do to recovery efforts.

Some areas could see higher rainfall totals. On Thursday night, the storm could bring wind gusts greater than 25 mph, and isolated tornadoes are possible.

Minor coastal flooding is possible at the beaches Friday and along the Lower Cape Fear River during the high tide. Hazardous marine conditions are possible later this week, with 7- to 10-foot seas possible and gale-force wind gusts Thursday night and Friday.

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• Citation (aglc Style)

Owen Hassell, Wilmington StarNews, 'In advance of Helene, Brunswick County Schools closed Friday; New Hanover goes remote', *StarNews* (online), 26 Sep 2024 https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view? p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BD476E983E5C20>



Wilmington, NC high school football Week 6 Live updates as Hoggard hosts Laney

September 26, 2024 | StarNews (Wilmington, NC) Author: Michael Cuneo, Wilmington StarNews | Section: Sports | 187 Words OpenURL Link

Another week of unpredictable high school sports action is coming to an end in the Wilmington area.

Week 6 of the high school football season was shaken up as schools across the state prepared for the impacts of Hurricane Helene, and the Wilmington area was no exception. None of the six originally scheduled Friday night matchups took place this week, but two games are on tap for Saturday.

Hoggard and Laney are set to face off at 1 p.m. this afternoon, while New Hanover and Topsail will square off just a few hours later. Here's a look at Week 6's revamped schedule and live updates from both of Saturday's games.

MIDSEASON Midseason stars: These Wilmington-area high school football players are off to a hot start

VIKINGS ON TOP Wilmington-area high school sports top performers: Hoggard football rolls past North Brunswick

Wilmington, NC high school football Week 6 schedule

Thursday

- * Whiteville 54, Trask 0
- * South Columbus 21, Pender 16

Saturday

- * Laney at Hoggard, 1 p.m.
- * Topsail at New Hanover, 3 p.m.

Monday, Sept. 30

- * South Brunswick at North Brunswick, 7 p.m.
- * Ashley at West Brunswick, 7 p.m.

Wilmington, NC high school football Week 6 live updates

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• Citation (aglc Style)

Michael Cuneo, Wilmington StarNews, 'Wilmington, NC high school football Week 6 Live updates as Hoggard hosts Laney', *StarNews* (online), 26 Sep 2024 https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?
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Weather forces West Iredell to postpone Fred T. Foard game

September 26, 2024 | Statesville Record & Landmark (NC) Author: Brian Meadows| Section: Football | 67 Words OpenURL Link

Weather forces West Iredell to postpone Fred T. Foard game

West Iredell High School announced Thursday that it moved Friday's home varsity football game against Fred T. Foard to 7 p.m. Monday.

The change was made due to deteriorating weather conditions associated with Hurricane Helene.

West Iredell (2-2, 0-1) seeks its first Western Foothills Athletic Conference victory while Foard (0-4, 0-1) looks for its first win of the season.

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• Citation (aglc Style)

Brian Meadows, 'Weather forces West Iredell to postpone Fred T. Foard game', *Statesville Record & Landmark* (online), 26 Sep 2024 https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BD72A6C2B87110



Lake Norman postpones A.L. Brown game to Monday

September 26, 2024 | Statesville Record & Landmark (NC) Author: Brian Meadows| Section: Football | 73 Words OpenURL Link

Lake Norman postpones A.L. Brown game to Monday

Lake Norman High School announced Thursday that it moved Friday's home varsity football game against A.L. Brown to Monday.

The change was made due to deteriorating weather conditions associated with Hurricane Helene.

The game represents Lake Norman's Greater Metro Conference opener. The Wildcats (3-1, 0-0) had their open date last week. A.L. Brown (3-1, 1-0) opened conference play last week with a 31-14 win over Hickory Ridge.

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• Citation (aglc Style)

Brian Meadows, 'Lake Norman postpones A.L. Brown game to Monday', *Statesville Record & Landmark* (online), 26 Sep 2024 https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BD72A6C421EC20



Wildcats survive 'Mud Bowl'

September 26, 2024 | Stokes News, The (Walnut Cove, NC) Author: Robert Money | Section: Sports | 974 Words OpenURL Link

EDEN — The West Stokes/Morehead football game had a lot of twist and turns, and it wasn't just about the game. The contest was moved up to Thursday, Sept. 26 due to Hurricane Helene's landfall and the closing of most schools on Friday with the possibility of flooding and power loss.

The game opened with a light sprinkle that soon went to heavy down pours of rain then a tornado warning that cleared the stadium and eventually ended the game with 1:19 left in the third quarter with West Stokes leading 24-

"The officials and Morehead personnel checked the quality of the field and the potentials of the weather once the warning was lifted, and it was in everyone's best interest to call the game and get our boys and families home," said Wildcat coach Trent Lowman. "Morehead did an excellent job handling everything and I appreciate their professionalism and consideration for their folks and ours.

"Well, football used to be played no matter what unless there was lightning. We got a taste of that last night. There's so many reasons outside of "football" to move games around and avoid bad weather, but it wasn't a real possibility this week. I thought our guys and coaches did a great job of putting the ball down and playing regardless of the elements."

The Wildcats wasted little time in getting on the scoreboard with Lindann Fleming racing 71-yards on the second play from the line-of-scrimmage. Myles Knox connected on the extra-point attempt making it 7-0.

West Stokes forced a fumble on Morehead's first possession with Tyler Doby recovering the ball on the Panthers' 4-yard line. Fleming punched it in on the first play making it 14-0 after Knox's extra-point kick with 8:39 left in the first quarter.

With the rain starting to pick up, the Wildcats looked to stick a dagger in the Panthers with a homerun shot by Wildcat quarterback Sam Reeves. Reeves' pass towards the left sideline was intercepted by Octavius Terry at the Morehead 25-yard line with 6:22 left in the opening period.

The West Stokes defense forced another punt, but this time the Panthers kick landed on the Cats' 14 yard line. The field possession game worked in Morehead's favor with the rain starting to come down harder. A fumble recovery and a 12-yard touchdown return by the Panther's Jaylen Lowe-Wright with 1:39 put the home team on the board and shrank the deficit to 14-6.

The Wildcats opening possession of the second quarter resulted in another score off the foot of Knox. Knox's sixth field-goal of the season with 9:28 left before the half broke a single season record for the most field goals made in a season.

With the rain steadily coming down, and the field conditions getting worse, West Stokes was able to hold a 17-6 advantage at the half.

The Purple Cats opened the second half possession with another 71-yard rushing touchdown. Senior Aydden Cherry hit paydirt after breaking through on the left side and raced for the score. Knox added the point after putting West up 24-6 with 6:35 left in the third quarter.

After another defensive stop by the Wildcats, the game ended with tornado sirens going off evacuating the stadium.

"We knew going in of the possibilities that awaited us," added Lowman. "Offensively we had a small 'mud' package that we worked on during the week and used it some. Our defense was playing great and after a couple of the turnovers we settled into not taking those chances. I also wanted our guys to get some experience working 'our' stuff in that weather in case the same elements pop up later in the season. We got experience with it and then we rode our defense's back until the end. Hats off to our defensive staff and players!"

The Wildcats' defense held the Panthers to 20 total yards of offense. Jackson Roscoe led the charge with 14 tackles followed by Daniel Stanley's 13. West Stokes had a season best six sacks in the game with Kobe McMillian and Stanley registering two each.

West Stokes' offense gained 227 yards of offense in just under three quarters of play. Fleming led the charge with 152-yards on 16 carries and 2TDs. Cherry recorded 80-yards on five carries and a score.

The Wildcats improve to 5-1 overall and 2-0 in the Mid-State 2A Conference, while the Panthers fell to 1-5 and 1-1. West Stokes will host North Forsyth on Friday, Oct. 4, while Morehead will travel to Walkertown 4-1, 2-0.

West Stokes will be accepting items at the football game on Friday to help with the relief of our neighbors in Western North Carolina. Game admission will be a donation of five non-perishable goods or a donation to the relief fund.

Items needed: Sports drinks powder packs, Hydration powder packs, water, baby wipes, diapers (children and adults), baby formula, bug spray, sunscreen, plastic utensils, manual can openers, trash bags (13 gallon or contractor bags), socks (all-sizes, unopened), non-perishable foods, cleaning supplies, plastic sheets/tarps, toothbrushes, toothpaste, toiletries/sanitations items, pet food (dog & cat), hand sanitizer, feminine hygiene products, and rubber boots, heavy duty work gloves.

For more information contact the school at 336-983-2099.

West Stokes 24, Morehead 6West Stokes 14 3 7 0 — 24

Morehead 6 0 0 0 — 6

ScoringFirst Quarter

WS (10:56) — Lindann Fleming 71-yard run, Myles Knox kick (7-0)

WS (8:39) — Fleming 4-yard run, Knox kick (14-0)

Morehead (1:39) — Jaylen Lowe-Wright 12-yard fumble return, kick failed (14-6)

Second Quarter

WS (9:18) — Myles Knox 30-yard field goal (17-6)

Third Quarter

WS (4:02) — Aydden Cherry 71-yard run, Knox kick (24-6)

Fourth Quarter

N/A

Individual StatisticsWest Stokes

Rushing: Lindann Fleming 16-152, 2TDs, Sam Reeves 5-(-18), Aydden Cherry 5-80, TD, Nate Akers 2-11

Passing: Sam Reeves 1-3-1, 2-yards

Receptions: Aydden Cherry 1-2

Morehead

Rushing: Trooper Wright 2-(-3), Brock Blizzard 1-4, Braxton Carter 7-24, Dequay Mathews 5-24, Jazay Millner 10-(-27), Elijah Townsend 8-(-12), Fredrick Peele 2-4

Passing: Jazay Millner 1-2-0, 6-yards

Receptions: Brock Blizzard 1-6

Records: West Stokes 5-1 (2-0), Morehead 1-5 (1-1)

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Flood watch issued, weather delays N.C. Highway 89 opening

September 26, 2024 | Stokes News, The (Walnut Cove, NC) Author: Staff Writer | Section: News | 418 Words OpenURL Link

The National Weather Service issued a flood watch for areas including Stokes County around 11 a.m. Thursday in effect through Friday evening.

"Catastrophic, life threatening flooding, caused by excessive rainfall continues to be possible," the alert states.

"Extensive street flooding and flooding of creeks and rivers are possible. Area creeks and streams are running high and could flood with more heavy rain."

Forecasters urge the public to stay alert for possible flood warnings.

Three to 10 inches of rain, falling on already saturated soil, was predicted; Stokes County Emergency Services Director Brandon Gentry said Thursday afternoon that the forecast had been updated to 2 to 4 inches.

"That can change," he added.

The rainfall is associated with Hurricane Helene, which was upgraded to a Category 2 hurricane Thursday morning and expected to be a Category 3 or higher when it makes landfall on Florida's northwestern coast Thursday evening, according to an Associated Press report.

Stokes County Schools issued a weather alert on social media that Friday, Sept. 27 will be a remote learning day.

Gentry said that the departments have been busy preparing for the storm: local stakeholders have met together and resources such as generators and the shelter have been checked.

The county and the NC Department of Transportation have developed a plan to try to keep the roads clear and open, Gentry said.

Resources have also been identified that, if not needed locally, can be sent to western areas of the state where the impact is expected to be severe.

The Greenville-Spartanburg, South Carolina branch of the National Weather Service issued a flood warning after noon on Thursday, reporting that rivers in North Carolina's Madison and Buncombe counties were already above flood level.

"Considerable to catastrophic Moderate to Major flooding across much of the French Broad River and Swannanoa River valleys is expected as a result of extremely rare rainfall," the alert states. "This flooding will exceed the Major, catastrophic flooding observed in September 2004 from Hurricanes Frances and Ivan and has the potential to exceed the 1916 floods, especially from the French Broad River headwaters near Rosman and Blantyre to Asheville."

N.C. HIGHWAY 89

The NC Department of Transportation announced Thursday morning that N.C. Highway 89 repairs have been delayed due to rain throughout the week and the road will not reopen by Sept. 30 as expected.

Contractors are in the "final surface" stage of repairs and still hope to reopen the segment north of Danbury early

next week, said S.P. (Pat) Ivey, district 9 engineer.

This story is developing, so please check back as more details may be added.

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Flash flood warning issued, tornado watch in effect

September 26, 2024 | Stokes News, The (Walnut Cove, NC) Author: Staff Writer | Section: News | 653 Words OpenURL Link

Stokes County is under multiple weather advisories, including a flash flood warning issued around 9 a.m. and a tornado watch issued around 8 a.m.

About 2 to 4 inches of rain have fallen across portions of Stokes County in the past 24 hours with an additional 2 to 4 inches possible in the warned area, according to a National Weather Service report.

A flood watch and wind advisory also remain in effect until 8 p.m.

There have been no reports of tornado activity as of about 10:30 a.m. on Friday, according to Stokes County Emergency Services Director Brandon Gentry.

Local impact of the storm has consisted of a lot of downed trees and power lines at this point, Gentry said.

"The number of trees falling is overwhelming to your local fire departments," Sheriff Joey Lemons cautioned on social media. "As they are trying to remove trees, other trees continue to fall around them. If you do not need to be on the roadways, please stay at home or wait till conditions improve."

So far, all the roads remain open except those closed by previous weather events.

According to an Associated Press report, Hurricane Helene weakened to a tropical storm Friday after making landfall overnight in northwestern Florida as a category 4 storm.

The National Weather Service in Blacksburg, Virginia, continues to issue warnings for the surrounding region. As of Friday morning, along with Stokes, Surry, Yadkin counties, and Rockingham counties and Patrick and Carroll counties in Virginia, remained under a flash flood warning and a tornado watch until 6 p.m. on Friday.

Widespread flooding and power outages have been reported in Surry County and downtown Elkin.

The National Weather Service first issued a flood watch for areas including Stokes County around 11 a.m. Thursday in effect through Friday evening.

"Catastrophic, life threatening flooding, caused by excessive rainfall continues to be possible," the alert states.

"Extensive street flooding and flooding of creeks and rivers are possible. Area creeks and streams are running high and could flood with more heavy rain."

Stokes County Schools issued a weather alert on social media that Friday, Sept. 27 will be a remote learning day.

Gentry said that the departments have been busy preparing for the storm: local stakeholders have met together and resources such as generators and the shelter have been checked.

Stokes County E-911 was staffed with extra telecommunicators to assist during the storm, and the NC Department of Transportation have developed a plan to try to keep the roads clear and open, Gentry said.

Resources have also been identified that, if not needed locally, can be sent to western areas of the state where the impact is expected to be more severe.

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Contractors are in the "final surface" stage of repairs and still hope to reopen the segment north of Danbury early next week, said S.P. (Pat) Ivey, district 9 engineer.

If you have flooding or storm stories you wish to share with readers of The Stokes News, when it is safe to do so, please send those to Terri Flagg at terri.flagg@thestokesnews.com along with information on who took the picture and where it was shot.

This story is developing, so please check back as more details may be added.

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• Citation (aglc Style)

Staff Writer, 'Flash flood warning issued, tornado watch in effect', *Stokes News, The* (online), 26 Sep 2024 https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BDC0F5D21F09C0