

# Severe weather impacts local sports last week - Hurricane Helene postpones multiple games in every sport as schools close

October 2, 2024 | Cherokee Scout (NC)

Author: CANNON CROMPTON sports@cherokeescout.com | Section: News | 517 Words

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Due to the heavy rain and severe weather last week, multiple games across all sports had to be canceled or postponed. Games scheduled from Sept. 25-27 were affected by severe weather that led to school closures throughout Cherokee County. Classes were also canceled Monday as well as all games scheduled to be played. Football The Andrews varsity and junior varsity football teams were scheduled to play last week, but both games were postponed. Varsity was supposed to play Friday night, but the game was moved to Saturday afternoon. On Friday afternoon, they announced the game was canceled. Andrews J V was scheduled to play against Murphy JV on T hursday. The game was moved up one day, then rescheduled to Monday night, then canceled. Murphy varsity was unaffected, as they had a bye week last week. This week, Andrews will host Swain County, while Murphy will head to Hayesville. Both games kick off at 7:30 p.m.

Friday. Volleyball Andrews' game on Sept. 24 against Swain was canceled due to an issue with the town's water system that led to the closing of Andrews elementary and high schools Tuesday. That game was rescheduled for Monday. Andrews was also scheduled to play at home against Cherokee on Thursday, but the game has been postponed until a later date. Murphy was scheduled to host Robbinsville on Thursday, but that game has also been postponed. Hiwassee Dam was scheduled to hit the road Thursday and take on Nantahala, but that game has been postponed to a later date. Their game Monday against Cooper Basin, Tenn., was also canceled. This week, Andrews and Hiwassee Dam are hosting their Pink Night games. Andrews hosts Murphy for its Pink Night game at 6 p.m. Thursday, while Hiwassee Dam hosts Highlands for its Pink Night game at 6 p.m. Thursday. On Monday, Hiwassee Dam hosts Swain County at 6 p.m. Meanwhile, on Tuesday, Murphy hosts Cherokee at 6 p.m., while Andrews hosts Hayesville at 6 p.m. Boys soccer Murphy was scheduled to play Tri-County Early College on Sept. 25, but the game has been rescheduled for 6 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 10. Tri-County's match against Summit Charter, originally scheduled for Friday, has been postponed until a later date. Andrews was scheduled to play Hayesville on Sept. 25, but the match has also been postponed. At 6 p.m. today, Murphy hosts Andrews, while Tri-County heads to Swain County. On Monday, Murphy heads to Swain at 6

p.m., Tri-County hosts Cherokee at 6 p.m. and Andrews hosts Highlands at 6 p.m. Cross country The cross-country meet originally scheduled for Sept. 25 in Hiwassee Dam has been canceled. Smoky Mountain Conference teams will head to Robbinsville for the final regular season meet today. Girls golf The girls golf teams got their match in on Sept. 24, but the match originally scheduled for Tuesday at Smoky Mountain Country Club has been canceled. The team's next matches are Tuesday, Oct. 8, at Chatuge Shores in Hayesville and Tuesday, Oct. 15, at Sequoyah National in Cherokee. These two match are playoff matches on the conference and state level as their season wraps up.

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#### • Citation (aglc Style)

CANNON CROMPTON sports@cherokeescout.com, 'Severe weather impacts local sports last week - Hurricane Helene postpones multiple games in every sport as schools close', *Cherokee Scout* (online), 2 Oct 2024 1B <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BF47595468C310">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BF47595468C310</a>



# Biden, Harris travel to areas hit hard by Hurricane Helene

October 2, 2024 | Courier-Times, The (Roxboro, NC) Author: Danny KEMP| Section: National | 600 Words OpenURL Link

US President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris are heading Wednesday to areas devastated by Hurricane Helene, after Harris's election rival Donald Trump sought to turn their handling of the disaster into campaign fodder.

Biden will survey damage by helicopter over the flood-hit city of Asheville, North Carolina, one of the places worst hit by the storm's deadly rampage through the southeastern United States.

He will also visit a rescue command center in the state, where more than 70 people were killed.

Before departing Washington, Biden announced the deployment of up to 1,000 active-duty soldiers to North Carolina to boost emergency response efforts including the "fight to save lives" in the devastated communities.

"These soldiers will speed up the delivery of life-saving supplies of food, water, and medicine to isolated communities in North Carolina," the president said in a statement.

"My heart goes out to everyone who has experienced unthinkable loss," he added. "We are here for you -- and we will stay here for as long as it takes."

The federal response in the region already tops 3,000 personnel, including National Guard members, emergency responders, health workers, and debris-clearing and power-restoration experts.

Harris, who replaced Biden as the Democratic presidential nominee for the November 5 election, will travel separately to the southern state of Georgia, which has also been badly hit.

Officials say Helene has killed at least 155 people and left hundreds unaccounted for across several states.

Deluges triggered by Helene have caused huge devastation in the region of the Appalachian mountains, with towns and villages cut off from the rest of the world.

Biden said he had not traveled earlier because rescue workers said his visit would have affected operations. He will also travel to Florida, where the storm roared ashore as a Category 4 hurricane, and Georgia in the coming days, the White House said.

North Carolina and Georgia are two of the seven crucial swing states that are likely to decide the result of the US election. Early voting has already begun in several states.

- 'He's lying' -

The visits come a day after the vice presidential candidates, Republican J.D. Vance and Democrat Tim Walz, faced off in a surprisingly civil debate -- the last scheduled on-stage showdown before election day.

The pair acknowledged common ground on multiple issues, including about those suffering from the storm, with Vance saying: "We want as robust and aggressive a federal response as we can get to save as many lives as possible."

But Republican former president Trump earlier sought to make political capital out of the disaster, accusing the administration, without evidence, of ignoring the crisis and denying help to his supporters.

Trump made his way to the disaster zone Monday, visiting the stricken town of Valdosta, Georgia and vowing to "bring lots of relief material, including fuel, equipment, water, and other things."

"He's lying" about government inaction, Biden told reporters Monday in the Oval Office, adding he had spoken to North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper "and he told him he's lying. I don't know why he does it... that's simply not true, and it's irresponsible."

Cooper has described the flooding's devastation as "beyond belief," with communities "wiped off the map."

The political storm over Helene comes as Biden and Harris weather a series of crises with barely a month until the knife-edge election.

As they coordinate hurricane response, Biden and Harris are also dealing with Iranian missile attacks on Israel that have further fueled tensions in the Middle East.

The White House is also trying to resolve a strike by US dockworkers that threatens the economy -- with the three crises giving rise to talk of a feared "October surprise" that could influence the election.

#### dk/mlm/des

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#### • Citation (aglc Style)

Danny KEMP, 'Biden, Harris travel to areas hit hard by Hurricane Helene', *Courier-Times, The* (online), 2 Oct 2024 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BF6950ABACDCC8">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BF6950ABACDCC8</a>



# 'Heartbreaking': Biden, Harris tour storm areas as deaths surpass 160

October 2, 2024 | Courier-Times, The (Roxboro, NC) Author: Danny Kemp, with Aurelia End in Augusta, Georgia Section: National | 689 Words OpenURL Link

US President Joe Biden on Wednesday witnessed Hurricane Helene's catastrophic destruction firsthand and Vice President Kamala Harris distributed aid to needy families, as thousands of federal responders joined all-out efforts to rescue residents and care for millions in the disaster.

Biden flew into the Carolinas and his deputy headed to Georgia after Harris's election rival Donald Trump sought to turn their handling of the disaster -- which has left at least 162 people dead in six states -- into campaign fodder.

Biden arrived in South Carolina and was briefed on the sprawling rescue and recovery effort -- an operation featuring more than 10,000 federal officials, emergency responders and National Guard across the US southeast.

He then flew by helicopter over the flood-hit city of Asheville, North Carolina, where staggering destruction was visible from the air, including collapsed bridges, lakes filled with debris, buildings demolished and roads washed away.

"What I saw was heartbreaking," Biden said on X.

"But back on the ground, we're witnessing neighbors helping neighbors, volunteers and workers standing side-byside, people leaning on each other. That's America."

Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas, traveling with the president, described Helene as a storm of "historic strength" that brought calamitous flooding to cities and remote mountain communities.

"We have towns that have disappeared, literally," he said. "This is a multi-billion-dollar, multi-year recovery."

- Towns and villages cut off -

Biden, who has approved major disaster declarations in several states, announced the deployment of up to 1,000 active-duty soldiers to North Carolina to help "speed up the delivery of life-saving supplies" including food, water, and medicine to isolated communities.

While getting briefed in the state, he spoke of Washington's obligation to provide help.

"In a moment like this we put politics aside," he said. "The nation has your back."

But he also warned how climate change is increasing the severity and frequency of extreme weather events.

"Nobody can deny the impact of the climate crisis anymore, at least I hope they don't," Biden said. "They must be brain-dead if they do."

Harris, who replaced Biden as the Democratic presidential nominee for the November 5 election, flew separately to the southern state of Georgia, which has also been badly hit.

She visited an emergency operations center in Augusta before surveying a neighborhood that suffered what she called "extraordinary" devastation.

Debris was scattered across the road and trees lay crashed onto homes near where the vice president comforted

grieving residents.

Harris assured Georgians the federal government was coordinating with local authorities to "get folks the support and the relief that they so desperately need and so rightly deserve."

"We are here for the long haul," she said.

Harris also helped hand out styrofoam containers of food to impacted families at a shelter, and received loud cheers when she departed.

North Carolina and Georgia are two of the seven crucial swing states likely to decide the result of the US election. Early voting has already begun in several states.

The White House announced Biden will travel Thursday to Florida, where Helene roared ashore last week as a Category 4 hurricane, and Georgia.

The storm's torrential rains have caused huge damage in the Appalachian mountains, with towns and villages cut off.

In east Tennessee, massive searches were underway near the Nolichucky River, where water flow spiked to record levels, leading to ferocious flooding.

"There are people still missing," Governor Bill Lee told a briefing. "We're in the middle of what is a remarkably difficult and tragic unfolding in east Tennessee."

- 'He's lying' -

The Biden and Harris visits come a day after vice presidential candidates J.D. Vance and Tim Walz faced off in a TV debate, where they acknowledged common ground about the need for a robust storm response.

But Republican former president Trump earlier sought to make political capital out of the disaster, accusing Biden's administration, without evidence, of ignoring the crisis and denying help to Trump supporters.

Biden told reporters Monday that Trump was "lying" and termed his attacks "irresponsible."

The political storm over Helene comes as Biden and Harris endure a series of crises with barely a month until the knife-edge election.

As they coordinate the hurricane response, Biden and Harris are also contending with escalating tensions between Iran and Israel, and a dockworkers' strike that threatens the country's economy.

#### dk/mlm/jgc

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## Citation (aglc Style)

Danny Kemp, with Aurelia End in Augusta, Georgia, "Heartbreaking': Biden, Harris tour storm areas as deaths surpass 160', *Courier-Times, The* (online), 2 Oct 2024 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?</a> p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BFA4C9D71414C0>



# Deadly Legacy of Storms Like Helene Can Linger for Over a Decade

October 2, 2024 | Courier-Times, The (Roxboro, NC) Author: Staff Writer | Section: Health | 849 Words OpenURL Link

## **Key Takeaways**

Deaths in areas hit hard by major storms like Helene may remain elevated for up to 15 yearsThese excess deaths could mount into the thousands, and can be traced back to storm-linked disruptions in income, family support and government spending on healthGovernments could do more to adjust their health care spending in the aftermath of such disasters, researchers say

WEDNESDAY, Oct. 2, 2024 (HealthDay News) -- As the southeastern United States begins to recover from Helene's devastation, a new study suggests the health impact of major storms can linger for over a decade.

So far, more than 120 people across six states have already been confirmed dead in Helene's aftermath, although that number could rise much higher as rescue efforts continue.

Now, a team from Stanford University reports the death toll over the much longer term could be in the thousands.

Even years later, "in any given month, people are dying earlier than they would have if the storm hadn't hit their community," explained senior study author Solomon Hsiang.

"A big storm will hit, and there's all these cascades of effects where cities are rebuilding or households are displaced or social networks are broken. These cascades have serious consequences for public health," said Hsiang, professor of environmental social sciences at Stanford's Doerr School of Sustainability.

Overall, the researchers estimate that anywhere between 7,000 and 11,000 excess deaths can be attributed to the years-long aftermath of a major tropical storm or hurricane.

Adding up the damage, major storms have since 1930 contributed to the deaths of anywhere from 3.6 million and 5.2 million Americans, the team reported Oct. 2 in the journal Nature.

That exceeds the combined number of deaths from motor vehicle accidents, infectious diseases or battle deaths in wars during the same time period, Hsiang's team noted.

To come to their conclusions, the researchers looked at data on 501 tropical storms or hurricanes that hit the Atlantic and Gulf coasts from 1930 to 2015. They compared state death rates for various populations during periods before and after these disasters.

Prior work by Hsiang had found that big storms can put the brakes on a state's economic growth for at least 15 years.

"When we started out, we thought that we might see a delayed effect of tropical cyclones on mortality maybe for six months or a year, similar to heat waves," said lead study author Rachel Young.

However, "the results show deaths due to hurricanes persist at much higher rates not only for months but years after floodwaters recede and public attention moves on," said Young. She's now a postdoctoral scholar at the University of California, Berkeley, but worked on the study while a master's student in Hsiang's prior lab there.

Why the long-term impact? The reasons are likely manifold, but the authors point out a few likely scenarios.

For example, people whose homes have been severely damaged by storms and floodwaters might exhaust financial resources in repairing the damage, leaving less money to pay for future health care.

Or storms may cause families to disperse, weakening social networks that bring the support that's often crucial to maintaining health.

Governments may also shift resources away from health care and towards recovery efforts.

Drilling down into the numbers, the new study estimates that economic and other pressures linked to storms could raise the death rate for infants, children and young adults over time.

They believe that a quarter of infant deaths and 15% of deaths to Americans under the age of 45 are related to the aftermath of tropical storms and hurricanes.

Why the impact on babies and children?

"These are infants born years after a tropical cyclone, so they couldn't have even experienced the event themselves in utero," Young said in a Stanford news release. "This points to a longer-term economic and maternal health story, where mothers might not have as many resources even years after a disaster than they would have in a world where they never experienced a tropical cyclone."

The death toll isn't spread equally: Black Americans have triple the odds to die in the months and years after a hurricane compared to their white peers, the study found.

Fatalities linked to storms were higher in areas that hadn't already had a long history of such disasters.

That's probably because nobody on the ground knew that they should be adapting for this and nobody in the medical community has planned a response, Young said.

She said that's a lesson for the future, given the effects of climate change.

"With climate change, we expect that tropical cyclones are going to potentially become more hazardous, more damaging, and they're going to change who they hit," said Young.

Is there anything individuals living in storm-prone areas can do?

According to Young, "Some solutions might be as simple as communicating to families and governments that, a few years after you allocate money for recovery, maybe you want to think about additional savings for health care-related expenses, particularly for the elderly, communities of color, and mothers or expectant mothers."

More information

Find out more about storm recovery at FEMA.

SOURCE: Stanford University, news release, Oct. 2, 2024

What This Means For You

A community's true recovery from major storms like Helene could take many years, with post-storm deaths rising over time.

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# • Citation (aglc Style)

Staff Writer, 'Deadly Legacy of Storms Like Helene Can Linger for Over a Decade', *Courier-Times, The* (online), 2 Oct 2024 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BF695068958E90">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BF695068958E90</a>



# President visits storm-ravaged North Carolina; death toll 178

October 2, 2024 | Courier-Times, The (Roxboro, NC) Author: Alan Wooten | The Center Square | Section: State | 592 Words OpenURL Link

(The Center Square) – Present but his desired out of the way, President Joe Biden flew over storm devastated regions of North and South Carolina on Wednesday.

Briefed in Raleigh on emergency operations in the aftermath of Hurricane Helene, Biden landed in Greenville, S.C., and met with emergency officials, then went to Raleigh before getting an aerial tour over Buncombe County and Asheville. Fifty-seven have been confirmed killed in the county, nearly one-third of the 178 across six states and more than half of North Carolina's 90.

"This natural disaster is incredibly consequential," Biden said before boarding Air Force One. "The last thing we need on top of that is a man-made disaster – what's going on at the ports."

He referred to the longshoreman's strike that began Tuesday at 12:01 a.m. Thirty-six ports on the East Coast and off the Gulf of Mexico are impacted.

Asheville Mayor Esther Manheimer was in South Carolina to greet him. Biden amended disaster assistance to North Carolina, increasing the level of federal funding to 100% of total eligible costs for 180 days starting from Wednesday of last week.

He also made disaster declaration increases in Florida and Georgia on Wednesday.

Early projections of damage costs range from \$95 billion to \$160 billion, pending on the source and metric inclusions.

Eight hurricanes since 1950 – nearly three-quarters of a century – have killed 100 or more people. Helene is only eclipsed – so far – by Katrina (2005, deaths 1,392), Audrey (1957, deaths 416), Camille (1969, deaths 256), Sandy (2012, deaths 219), and Diane (1955, deaths 184).

Water, food, power utilities and infrastructure have all been compromised. Former President Donald Trump took a call from state Sen. Danny Britt, R-Robeson, and made another to friend Elon Musk that jump-started broadband connectivity through aerospace giant SpaceX subsidiary Starlink.

Major communications companies were saying Wednesday their restoration efforts are at about 60%.

Opposite that high tech end of the spectrum, mules were carrying provisions through the Appalachian Mountains to stranded survivors. Trained canines were involved in the search for people. An updated number of those unaccounted for – it was 600 on Monday, said Homeland Security Adviser Liz Sherwood-Randall – was not available.

More than 1 million were without power at the peak of the storm. Gov. Roy Cooper's office said restoration has gone to more than 500,000, with about 408,000 still without power. More than 1,600 personnel, including 55 search and rescue teams, have rescued more than 500 people and 150 pets.

The state Department of Transportation has erected 8,000 barricades and signs; used 1,600 employees and 68 contracted crews in recovery; and operated more than 1,000 chainsaws and 1,500 trucks, graders, backhoes and loaders.

Asheville, at 94,589, is easily the largest city in the state west of Winston-Salem near the Virginia border and

Charlotte toward South Carolina, has a city water system damaged. At 9 p.m. Wednesday, the number of roads closed in North Carolina because of Helene was up to 511. It includes three interstates, 32 federal highways, 48 state roads and 428 secondary roads.

Homeland Security Alejandro Mayorkas, aboard Air Force One en route, said more than 4,800 federal workforce personnel are deployed to the impacted areas, including 1,000 from FEMA. He said more than 8.8 million meals and 7.4 million liters of water have been shipped; 150 generators and more than 225,000 tarps have been sent to the region.

Six thousand National Guardsmen are deployed in six states.

Mayorkas said the recovery is multiple years and a multibillion-dollar recovery.

"We have towns that have disappeared, literally," he said.

One thousand active-duty soldiers have been deployed to support delivery of food.

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#### • Citation (aglc Style)

Alan Wooten | The Center Square, 'President visits storm-ravaged North Carolina; death toll 178', *Courier-Times, The* (online), 2 Oct 2024 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BFA4CC3A297338">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BFA4CC3A297338</a>



# US urgently tries to shape Israel's response to Iran

October 2, 2024 | Courier-Times, The (Roxboro, NC) Author: Léon BRUNEAU | Section: National | 552 Words OpenURL Link

The United States knows Israel will retaliate after Iran's major missile attack, and even says it supports such a move, but is trying to influence the nature of the response, warning against targeting Tehran's nuclear facilities.

US President Joe Biden, who consulted with his G7 counterparts on Wednesday after the Islamic republic fired off about 200 ballistic missiles, set a clear red line for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

"All seven of us agree that they have a right to respond, but they should respond in proportion," Biden said, without going into detail about what such a response might look like.

All sides are aware that any retaliatory strike against Iran's nuclear or oil installations would send the Middle East spiralling even more towards chaos, but Israel seems not to have made a decision yet.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken conferred with his French, British, German and Italian counterparts to convey that message, the State Department said.

In Washington and elsewhere, a sinking feeling of dread is prevailing as officials wait to see if Netanyahu, under pressure at home to act, will be tempted to strike hard and deeper into Iran, taking the fight to his country's sworn enemy.

After dealing the Iran-backed Hezbollah a serious blow in Lebanon by assassinating its leader last week, and after subduing Hamas in the Gaza Strip, will Netanyahu see this as a unique opportunity to go big? It's the million-dollar question.

On Wednesday, former Israeli premier Naftali Bennett called for a decisive strike to destroy Iran's nuclear facilities and thus "fatally cripple this terrorist regime."

- Avoid all-out war -

On Wednesday, State Department spokesman Matthew Miller said Washington has "made clear for some time that we do not want to see a full-blown regional escalation."

"Israel has a right to respond... and we are going to continue to discuss with them what that response might look like, but we don't want to see any action that would lead to a full-blown regional war," he told reporters.

Miller refuted any notion that Washington no longer had influence over its ally.

When Iran first struck Israel in April, a move that Tehran basically telegraphed to the world, Israel responded with limited strikes, thanks in part to US pressure, says Sina Toossi, a senior fellow at the Center for International Policy in Washington.

"I do see this concerted effort by US officials and Israeli officials to downplay this in a sense," Toossi said, while acknowledging that Iran's action this time was stronger.

In April, Biden made a concerted effort to demonstrate Washington's support for Israel, quickly calling Netanyahu.

This time, the White House has thus far made no such outreach, with Biden on Wednesday visiting southeastern

states hit hard by Hurricane Helene.

When asked when he might speak to Netanyahu, Biden replied, using his nickname: "We've been talking to Bibi's people the whole time. And it's not necessary to talk to Bibi. I'll probably be talking to him relatively soon."

Nevertheless, after nearly a year of war in Gaza with Hamas, Israel is certainly dictating the moves, and Washington, its primary diplomatic and military ally, is in crisis management mode, and has thus far refused to play the military aid card to bring Israel in line.

"Everything right now hinges on Israel's response, whether it escalates in a regional war," Toossi said, while adding that both Netanyahu and Iran were "taking huge gambles."

#### lb/sst/dw

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## • Citation (aglc Style)

Léon BRUNEAU, 'US urgently tries to shape Israel's response to Iran', *Courier-Times, The* (online), 2 Oct 2024 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BFA4CAC89305C8">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BFA4CAC89305C8</a>



# Study reveals long-term death toll of cyclones as world battered

October 2, 2024 | Courier-Times, The (Roxboro, NC) Author: Daniel Lawler | Section: National | 729 Words OpenURL Link

As a typhoon battered Taiwan and rescuers searched for hurricane survivors in the United States on Wednesday, a study estimated that the long-term death toll of such tropical cyclones is around 300 times greater than official figures.

Hurricane Helene has killed at least 155 people in the southeastern US, Hurricane John killed at least 16 in Mexico last week and two people have died in Taiwan even before Typhoon Krathon makes landfall, expected Thursday morning.

However the immediate deaths recorded during tropical cyclones -- also called hurricanes or typhoons, depending on where they hit -- represent just a fraction of the real toll they take on lives in the years after the storm clears, according to new research.

And with human-driven climate change expected to help make tropical cyclones more intense, the US researchers called for people in the affected regions to receive more support.

The research published in the journal Nature is the first to use statistical modelling to estimate how cyclones affect the overall number of deaths in a region over a long time frame, lead study author Rachel Young told AFP.

The researchers looked at 501 tropical cyclones that hit the continental US between 1930 and 2015, analysing the number of excess deaths from all causes recorded in the 15 years that followed.

The average number of deaths officially reported during individual storms was 24.

But if indirect deaths in the years after the storm were counted, the average toll for each was between 7,000 and 11,000, around 300 times higher than government figures, the study estimated.

This would mean that cyclones contributed to between three and five percent of all deaths recorded in the affected areas on the US Atlantic coast over those 85 years, the study said.

The total death toll over that time could be as high as five million, meaning that cyclones may have contributed to more deaths than car accidents, infectious diseases or deaths in war, it added.

- 'Nobody knew this was happening' -

When the researchers first saw how long the devastating effect of cyclones lasted on communities -- which drove the huge numbers -- they were "very surprised, and very sceptical," Young said.

"Nobody knew this was happening," said Young, a researcher at the University of California, Berkeley.

Young and Stanford University's Solomon Hsiang spent years trying to rule out other possible explanations for these figures, but could not, she said.

The study was not able to directly link how a particular hurricane led to any excess deaths.

Young compared the results to how the world recorded far more excess deaths during the pandemic than those directly attributed to Covid-19 by countries.

But the researchers offered some theories about how hurricanes could have contributed to so much death over the years, including economic disruption, infrastructure damage, increased pollution and stress, and working-age people moving away.

Young gave an example of a person who uses their retirement savings to repair their home after a hurricane, only to find themselves short on money for healthcare later in life.

Previous research has shown that local and state government budgets are smaller in hurricane-hit regions, further depriving these communities, she added.

- Black people disproportionately affected -

Many of these people are unaware that their long-term health has been affected by the aftermath of a cyclone, Young said.

Babies born even five to 10 years after a storm were much more at risk of dying early in cyclone-hit areas, the study found.

Black people were also at a far higher risk of early death. Even adjusting for other factors, the study estimated that living in a cyclone-hit region contributed to 15.6 percent of all Black deaths from 1930 and 2015.

Tolls also varied by state. Thirteen of all deaths in Florida, 11 percent in North Carolina, nine percent in South Carolina and eight percent in Louisiana over the time period could all be traced back to cyclones, the study said.

States hit by more hurricanes, such as Florida, were more resilient than those less experienced at getting struck, the data showed.

But if climate change helps drive hurricanes into new areas, this could lead to higher death rates in those unexperienced regions, Young warned.

Stephen Burgess, an epidemiologist at the University of Cambridge not involved in the research, told AFP that its methodology was sound.

But he emphasised that the world has always been hit by cyclones.

"The authors are asking the question: what if there weren't any tropical cyclones? But this is not a factor we can change."

dl/jj

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## • Citation (aglc Style)

Daniel Lawler, 'Study reveals long-term death toll of cyclones as world battered', *Courier-Times, The* (online), 2 Oct 2024 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BF6951A4970120">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BF6951A4970120</a>



# Biden official urges talks as US port strike enters second day

October 2, 2024 | Courier-Times, The (Roxboro, NC) Author: John BIERS| Section: National | 521 Words OpenURL Link

US dockworkers picketed for a second day Wednesday, garnering support from other labor groups as the Biden administration urged shippers to boost their offer to end a damaging strike weeks before the presidential election.

About 45,000 workers with the International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) walked off their port jobs early Tuesday, having failed to reach a new agreement with the United States Maritime Alliance (USMX), which represents shipping companies and terminal operators.

Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg said the strike could be ended quickly, arguing that shippers need to share more of the bounty after a period of "unbelievable profits."

"We actually think the parties, economically, are not as far apart from each other as they may think," Buttigieg told CNBC a day after the strike began at major East and Gulf Coast ports.

"They're the ones who need to get to the table, work it out, reach a deal and get those ports back," Buttigieg said.

But an ILA spokesman said early Wednesday afternoon that there was no news in terms of negotiations. Top union brass went to picket and were joined by members of the Teamsters union.

The ILA is pressing for protections against automation-related job loss and for hefty wage hikes after dockworkers kept providing essential services throughout the Covid-19 pandemic.

USMX said late Wednesday that it hoped to return soon to the bargaining table.

"Reaching an agreement will require negotiating -- and our full focus is on how to return to the table to further discuss these vital components, many of which are intertwined," USXM said.

"We cannot agree to preconditions to return to bargaining -- but we remain committed to bargaining in good faith to address the ILA's demands and USMX's concerns," it added.

- 'Catastrophe' -

President Joe Biden's administration has signaled it has no plans to intervene in the strike, with Biden himself emphasizing the importance of collective bargaining rights.

But South Carolina officials Governor Henry McMaster and Senator Lindsey Graham, both Republicans, said the president should reconsider his position in light of the effects of Hurricane Helene, which has ravaged the Carolinas.

"We're having our ports shut down in the middle of just a catastrophe in this part of South Carolina and North Carolina. I'm all for people being treated fairly. But I've urged President Biden not to let this go on much longer," said Graham, who expressed worry about access to medical supplies.

"This hurricane was Mother Nature. The port problem is man-made. So I'm urging President Biden, do not let this linger," Graham said, warning the continued port closures could lead to a "calamity."

An ILA spokesman did not immediately respond to a request for comment on Graham's remarks.

However, the union blasted an article in the New York Post which published photos of ILA President Harold Daggett's estate in Sparta, New Jersey, along with an image of a Bentley car.

The Post article was published "with the intention of weakening his ability to negotiate a new Master Contract for ILA members," the ILA said.

"The publication of pictures of Mr Daggett's home is reckless and places Mr Daggett and his family at great risk of personal harm," said a letter from his attorney to the New York Post counsel.

## jmb/bjt

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#### • Citation (aglc Style)

John BIERS, 'Biden official urges talks as US port strike enters second day', *Courier-Times, The* (online), 2 Oct 2024 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BFA4CA5A8CF388">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BFA4CA5A8CF388</a>>



# Dock strike: 'Some things will get here slower, and some of it won't get here at all'

October 2, 2024 | Courier-Times, The (Roxboro, NC) Author: Shirleen Guerra | The Center Square | Section: National | 960 Words OpenURL Link

(The Center Square) – When an estimated 45,000 members of the International Longshoreman's Association went on strike at 36 U.S. ports seeking higher pay and protections against automation, the union boss threatened to cripple the U.S. economy.

A respected leader in supply chain law doesn't disagree as the strike is now in its second day.

"If you remove the ports from the equation, you have to ask how things will get where they need to be," said Ronald Leibman, partner for McCarter & English, in an interview with The Center Square. "Some things will get here more slowly, and some of it won't get here at all, like what we saw with COVID-19; and we can expect wholesale retail prices to go up."

The strike comes days after Hurricane Helene devastated parts of the Carolinas, Florida, Georgia, Tennessee and Virginia, which have all reported deaths. AccuWeather estimates the storm caused damages and economic losses of \$145 billion to \$160 billion alone.

Both of these events point to a bigger picture of a slowdown in the United States' transportation of goods ahead of the holiday season, the peak for shipping.

"I will cripple you, and you have no idea what that means. Nobody does," Harold Dagget, chief negotiator for the International Longshoremen Association, said in an interview posted to YouTube last week.

Daggett outlined a multi-week dockworkers strike at ports across the East and Gulf coasts.

"When my men hit the streets from Maine to Texas, every single port locked down. You know what's going to happen? I'll tell you," Daggett said. "First week, be all over the news every night, boom, boom. Second week: Guys who sell cars can't sell cars, because the cars ain't coming in off the ships. They get laid off. Third week, malls are closing down.

"They can't get the goods from China. They can't sell clothes. They can't do this. Everything in the United States comes on a ship. They go out of business. Construction workers get laid off because the materials aren't coming in. The steel is not coming in. The lumber is not coming in. They lose their job. Everybody's hating the longshoremen now because now they realize how important our jobs are."

The Observatory of Economic Complexity, billed as the world's leading data visualization tool for international trade data, says top American imports are crude petroleum (value \$199 billion), cars (\$159 billion), broadcasting equipment (\$116 billion), computers (\$108 billion), and packaged medicaments (\$91.3 billion).

Daggett is leading the negotiations for his workers to receive higher wages and assurances that their jobs will be safe from automation and artificial intelligence in the future.

Leibman said costs go up when the supply chain stalls and products can be more scarce. When looking at this from an import view, the Christmas season is not really the biggest issue, he said.

"I'm not saying it won't come eventually, but the question really is about regular stocks, like bananas," Leibman said. "Seventy-five percent of bananas come through the East Coast, so the question now is, where are they going to come in through? If this lasts longer than a week, I think the average person will start to question why bananas

are costing them significantly more. I don't think that rhetoric will play well politically."

The longshoreman's union responded to the offer of a 50% increase for union members, stating, "USMX's recent press release is another attempt to distort the facts and mislead the public. The ILA rejected the 'nearly 50% wage increase' because it didn't address the demands of members adequately."

USMX is an acronym for the U.S. Maritime Alliance, which represents terminal operators and ocean carriers.

"They might claim a significant increase, but they conveniently omit that many of our members are operating multimillion-dollar container-handling equipment for a mere \$20 an hour," the union says. "In some states, the minimum wage is already \$15. Furthermore, our members endure a grueling six-year wage progression before they can even reach the top wage tier, regardless of how many hours they work or the effort they put in."

States with \$15 minimum wage or higher are California (\$16), Connecticut (\$15.69), Maryland (\$15), Massachusetts (\$15), New Jersey (\$15.13 for large employers), New York (\$15), Washington (\$16.28), and the District of Columbia (\$16.10).

The union says two-thirds of workers are constantly on call.

The White House released a statement on the matter stating, "Collective bargaining is the best way for workers to get the pay and benefits they deserve." It also urged the sides to come together and talk.

Before boarding Air Force One on Wednesday, President Joe Biden stumbled through a response. According to a White House transcript, he said, "And, look, there's a – there's a consortium of mak- – basically six owners that control all the ports from all the way to the East Coast, down around the Gulf. And – and they've made – they've made incredible profits – over 800% profit since the pandemic, and the owners are making tens of millions of dollars in this.

As previously reported by The Center Square, pay is one of the main reasons for the strike.

Dockworkers can earn more than \$100,000 annually because of work rules and overtime requirements, meaning more than half of 3,726 dockworkers at the Port of New York and New Jersey earned more than \$150,000 in the fiscal year that ended in 2020, according to the port's regulator, the Waterfront Commission of New York Harbor.

One in five dockworkers at the port earned more than \$250,000 that year, and at least 18 dockworkers brought in more than \$450,000 in the same year.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the real median household income for all Americans was \$74,580 in 2022.

If the Taft-Hartley Act is used, dockworkers must return to work for 90 days. Biden has said that he won't use the federal law to intervene.

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#### • Citation (aglc Style)

Shirleen Guerra | The Center Square, 'Dock strike: 'Some things will get here slower, and some of it won't get here at all'', *Courier-Times, The* (online), 2 Oct 2024 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?</a> p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BFA4CB080DA540>



# Perquimans residents asked to help out Rutherford County residents hard hit by Helene

October 2, 2024 | Daily Advance, The (Elizabeth City, NC) Author: Julian Eure | Section: Local | 405 Words OpenURL Link

HERTFORD — Perquimans County residents are being asked to help out residents of one of the western North Carolina counties hard hit by Hurricane Helene last week.

Perquimans County Emergency Services Director Jonathan Nixon noted Monday that residents of Rutherford County have great need for toilet paper; paper towels; plastic forks, knives and spoons; disposable plates; disinfectant wipes; prepackaged "nabs"; Granola bars; and Pop-tarts.

Nixon noted that Rutherford "holds a special link" to Perquimans because the county serves as a backup for the Perquimans-Gates 911 Center during emergencies.

"Today, we have the opportunity to support them," he said. "In the wake of Hurricane Helene, this community finds itself in need of basic items to survive."

Nixon asked residents to consider dropping donated items at either the Perquimans County Emergency Services at 159 Creek Drive, Hertford, or Perquimans County High School at Perquimans County High School at 305 S Edenton Road Street in Hertford.

He noted that the initial delivery to Rutherford County would be Monday, Oct. 7.

Rutherford is home to the following towns and cities: Bostic, Ellenboro, Forest City, Lake Lure, Ruth, Rutherfordton, Spindale and Chimney Rock.

Food Bank of the Albemarle and seven other food banks across the state are also accepting donations and other items for delivery to the state's western counties hard hit by Helene.

In addition to non-perishable food, the food bank is also accepting donations of personal hygiene items and cleaning supplies. Food items preferably should be in pop-top, easy-to-open containers. The food bank cannot accept clothing or furniture

Items will be accepted during the food bank's regular business hours, which are Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information about how to help, contact the food bank's main line at 252-335-4035.

Gov. Roy Cooper is also encouraging donations to the North Carolina Disaster Relief Fund to help communities recover from catastrophic damage caused by Helene.

"There is a massive effort underway to get help to the people of Western North Carolina including state and federal relief but we know there will be additional needs," Governor Roy Cooper said. "If you're able to give, please consider a donation to help North Carolinians as they clean up and recover from Helene."

To donate to the North Carolina Disaster Relief Fund, visit nc.gov/donate.

Donations can also be mailed to: NC Disaster Relief Fund, 20312 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-0312; or NC Disaster Relief Fund, c/o United Way of NC, 1130 Kildaire Farm Road, Suite 100, Cary NC 27511.

# • Citation (aglc Style)

Julian Eure, 'Perquimans residents asked to help out Rutherford County residents hard hit by Helene', *Daily Advance, The* (online), 2 Oct 2024 https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BF692D24517858>



# 100-plus tour Hertford's historic sites during PCRA's Jollification!

October 2, 2024 | Daily Advance, The (Elizabeth City, NC) Author: Kesha Williams | Section: Local | 1010 Words OpenURL Link

HERTFORD — After days of rain drenched the area ahead of Tropical Storm Helene's arrival in North Carolina, Saturday's dry and 87-degree weather came as a bit of surprise for both organizers of the Perquimans County Restoration Association's annual Jollification! historic sites tour and visitors taking it.

Sandy Stevenson, president of the PCRA, didn't seem to mind the unseasonably warm temperatures as he greeted visitors entering the fellowship hall at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church to pick up their guidebooks for the tour of 13 historic sites in Hertford.

"We've got great weather," he said. "We were a bit nervous that Hurricane Helene was coming in but it swept out just in time."

When meteorologists determined Wednesday that Helene wouldn't twirl up the North Carolina coastline from Florida, PCRA members began finalizing preparations for this year's Jollification! tour and dinner.

That 13-site tour included stops at the Craftsman-style Sears Home, two historic homes on North Front Street — one a Colonial Revival, the other a Georgian Colonial Revival — and the Phelps Point/Edmundson Fox Monument at the corner of Church and Newby streets.

Jollification! attendees had the option of paying \$25 for just for the home tours, or \$25 for a dinner scheduled later in the evening at the Newbold-White House. A number paid \$40 to attend both. Stevenson said the entire event had been a success.

"We had 100 people who came here to pick up their home tour guidebooks," he said. "We sold 20 extra tickets today just for people who wanted to take the tour. The dinner was sold out."

Stevenson said Jollification! chair Clair Flaugher had done a "fantastic job" of putting together the 13 stops on this year's historic site tour.

Among the tour attendees were Vickie and Gary Page of Farmville, Virginia. As the author of "Freedom's Water," a new historical novel set in 1752 Onslow County, Vickie Page said she was enjoying seeing some Hertford's historic homes.

Actually, the Pages had visited Hertford some months back for Vickie to conduct some research for "Freedom's Water." The book's plot follows the journey of three characters fleeing Onslow County by periauger — an 18th century two-masted, flat-bottomed sailing vessel — in the wake of a hurricane.

The PCRA maintains a replica of a periauger, known as the "Lady P," and Vickie Page said she wanted to "make sure my book descriptions of the boat and the characters' journey aboard it were historically accurate."

"When we heard about Jollification! held this weekend and the raffle I said to my husband, 'We have to come back,'" Page said.

The raffle Page was referring to was a raffle at Saturday's dinner for artist Robin Dahl Sams' original oil painting of the Lady P donated by Dr. and Mrs. R.E. Lane.

Page, who along with her husband was taking in the view of the Perquimans River from the porch of the James

Rogers Stokes House, said the home tour was "absolutely delightful."

"The dedication to historical accuracy and the renovations of the buildings and homes is astonishing," she said.

She also was happy that owners of homes on the tour "were gracious to allow us to tromp through their homes." At one house, they went inside and talked to "a lovely couple" who explained the renovations they had made to their home and "what brought them to Hertford," Page said.

Tour-goers also met Father Whit Stroud, the new rector at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, which was built between 1849 and 1850. Stroud is a Washington, N.C., native who just began serving at the church in September.

Stroud welcomed visitors to the church, where each tour began, and explained a little about the church's architecture and furnishings, which include an organ acquired in 1854.

"The church is a traditional, Colonial Episcopal church, and its Gothic (Revival) style is shown in the high arch ceilings and the style of woodwork that we have," he said. "A lot of what you see here is original. Our biggest piece, the organ, is a wonderful instrument. It's a really historic church."

Hertford Mayor Ashley Hodges and his daughters, 10th-grader Mahalia and 8th-grader Laciana, also welcomed tourgoers to their home, the Dr. Thomas Preston Brinn House.

The Georgian Colonial Revival structure built in 1938 sits on on oversized riverfront lot. The Hodges purchased the home in 2018 and began restoring it.

According to Hodges, the house had sustained extensive moisture damage over the years from the area's humid climate and numerous storm events. Large trees near the foundation and overgrown garden elements also had to be removed.

"When we bought the house you couldn't see it from the street," he said. "We tried to cut it (overgrowth) back to have a big front lawn like the Brinns had."

Saturday was the first time the Hodges had participated in the historic site tour. The mayor said he agreed to have the home included after a neighbor suggested his family do so.

"We have a great picture of when we were looking (to purchase) the house. She (his wife) is taking a picture and looking at the front of the house. I'm standing behind her in the photo looking downward and shaking my head," Hodges joked.

"I liked the house, too, but I was thinking 'this is going to take so much work,'" Hodges continued. The renovations did take a lot of work "but it's been worth it," he said.

According to Flaugher, final figures on how much this year's Jollification! raised for the PCRA's work aren't available yet. Approximately 150 people attended the Jollification! dinner at the Newbold-White House. Eleven cakes and pies donated by local bakers that were auctioned off for between \$200 and \$500 each also boosted the event's bottom line, she said.

"We have amazing bakers in the county. I won't know (the final figures) until our meeting but we probably made a couple of thousand (dollars) on cakes and pies," Flaugher said.

She also believes the PCRA raised between \$2,000 and \$3,000 from raffle tickets sold for Sams' painting of the Lady P.

Jollification is held each year to fund the Perquimans County Restoration Association's historic preservation efforts, which include operating the Newbold-White House in Hertford, North Carolina's oldest brick home.

# • Citation (aglc Style)

Kesha Williams, '100-plus tour Hertford's historic sites during PCRA's Jollification!', *Daily Advance, The* (online), 2 Oct 2024 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BF692D0C8FE970">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BF692D0C8FE970</a>



# What's Up

October 2, 2024 | Daily Advance, The (Elizabeth City, NC) Author: Julian Eure | Section: Whats Up | 1855 Words OpenURL Link

**TODAY** 

First Friday ArtWalk

Elizabeth City Downtown Inc. will host the First Friday ArtWalk for October in downtown Elizabeth City from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Donations for western NC

Food Bank of the Albemarle is accepting donations of food and other items for delivery to western counties in North Carolina hard hit by Tropical Storm Helene. In addition to non-perishable food, the food bank is also accepting donations of personal hygiene items and cleaning supplies. Items will be accepted Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Contact: 252-335-4035.

**SATURDAY** 

Rhythm & Brews

Arts of the Albemarle will host the ninth annual River City Rhythm & Brews fundraiser on Poindexter Street, next to AoA, from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. Advance tickets are \$30. Tickets for AoA members and military service personnel are \$25. Tickets the day of the event are \$35. Designated drivers get in free. Visit https://our.show/arts-of-the-albemarle/98729.

Arts on the Perquimans

The Perquimans Arts League will host its 12th annual Arts on the Perquimans at the Perquimans County Parks and Recreation Center at 310 Granby St., Hertford, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission is \$5, but kids 12 and younger get in free.

Jeep Jam

The Elizabeth City Jeep Jam will be held across from Carolina Chrysler Jeep at 1001 Halstead Blvd., Elizabeth City, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. The event will include a Jeep Show & Shine Contest and Awards, 50/50 prize raffles, live music and food trucks. Tickets are \$20 donation per Jeep. Ticket and Show & Shine entry is \$40 donation per Jeep.

Friends of Poor Walk/Run

The Friends of the Poor Walk/Run will be held through historic Edenton. Registration starts at 8 a.m. and the walk/run starts at 8:30 a.m. and 8:45 a.m.

Race on the Runway

Race on the Runway will be held at Currituck Regional Airport in Maple. A Tarmac 10K starts at 8:30 a.m.; the First Flight 5K starts at 9 a.m.; and a one-mile Taxi Trot Fun Run will follow at 10 a.m.

Planes and Plows

Currituck County's "Planes and Plows" will be held at 11 a.m. The event will feature agricultural and aviation exhibits, interactive displays, contests, music, food trucks, and other activities. It will be followed at 5:30 p.m. by the Currituck County Sheriff's Community Night Out event.

#### **MONDAY**

#### EC Rotary Club

The Elizabeth City Rotary Club will meet in the Parish House of Christ Episcopal Church at 1 p.m. Elizabeth City-Pasquotank Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Keith Parker will be the speaker.

#### Red Cross blood drives

The American Red Cross will host a blood drive in the Edenton Baptist Church fellowship hall Monday from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m., and in the Family Life Center at Holy Family Catholic Church in Elizabeth City Tuesday from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

#### Computer help

The Pasquotank County Library will host computer assistance program on PowerPoint Monday; Word 2 on Tuesday; one-on-one computer help on Wednesday; and Excel 2 on Thursday. All programs at 4 p.m. and require pre-registration by calling Mike at 335-7536.

#### **TUESDAY**

## **NEAAAT** ground breaking

The Northeast Academy for Aerospace and Advanced Technologies will host a ground breaking ceremony for its new aviation, advanced manufacturing and fabrication labs at 1413 W. Ehringhaus St., Elizabeth City, at 10 a.m.

## Library storytime

The Pasquotank County Library will host a storytime program on the theme "Dance, Dance, Dance" for kids ages 3-5 with an adult on Tuesday; kids ages 1-2 on Wednesday; and kids 1 and younger on Thursday. All classes at 10 a.m.

#### WEDNESDAY

## **Programming Room**

The East Carolina Digital Literacy Program will host a basic computer skills class at the Pasquotank County Library Oct. 9 from 10 a.m. to noon. Students will learn how to use the basics of a computer, word documents, and how to set up email. To register, call the library at 252-335-7536 or visit https://bit.ly/47CNVIw. Each participant who completes the pre-test and post-test will be entered in a drawing to win an iPad. Light refreshments will be served.

## **UPCOMING**

## Shrimp by the Bay

The Edenton-Chowan Chamber of Commerce will host the 23rd annual Shrimp by the Bay fundraiser on the green of the 1767 Chowan County Courthouse Friday, Oct. 11 from 6:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. Tickets sold only in advance. Call: 252-482-3400.

#### ECHNA's Ghost Walk

The Elizabeth City Historic Neighborhood Association's Ghost Walk will be held in Elizabeth City Friday and Saturday, Oct. 11-12 from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. Ticket information to be announced.

#### 'Trial by Fire' at COA

College of The Albemarle will host "Trial by Fire: Journey Tribute" in the Performing Arts Center Saturday, Oct. 12, at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$15 for general admission, \$10 for military personnel and senior citizens, and \$6 for students and staff.

## VFW Oyster Roast

Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 6060 will host its annual Oyster Roast at 1433 N. Road St., Elizabeth City, Saturday, Oct. 12, from noon to 3 p.m. Doc Perkins will perform live music. Advance all-you-can-eat oyster tickets are \$35; the fried oyster sandwich plate tickets are \$20; and fried chicken plate tickets are \$15. All tickets day of the event will cost \$5 more.

#### Red Cross blood drives

The American Red Cross will host blood drives at Durants Neck Ruritan Club in Hertford, Sunday, Oct. 13, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.; the Camden Middle School auditorium Monday, Oct. 14, from noon to 5 p.m.; and Fellowship Baptist Church fellowship hall in Moyock, Thursday, Oct. 17, from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m.

#### Alzheimer's support

The Alzheimer/Dementia Support Group for Caregivers and Family members meets at Hertford United Methodist Church, 200 Dobbs St., Hertford, Monday, Oct. 14, at 1 p.m. Contact: 252-404-7090 or 252-333-7774.

## Secure Access Self Storage

The Elizabeth City Area Chamber of Commerce will host a ribbon cutting for Secure Access Self Storage at 1100 Megan Drive, Elizabeth City, Tuesday, Oct. 15, from 4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

#### Computer help

The Pasquotank County Library will host computer assistance program on Excel Monday, Oct. 14; Google Drive on Tuesday, Oct. 15; Google Docs on Wednesday, Oct. 16; and Word 1 on Thursday, Oct. 17. All programs at 4 p.m. and require pre-registration by calling Mike at 335-7536.

## Library storytime

The Pasquotank County Library will host a storytime program on the theme "Cats" for kids ages 3-5 with an adult on Tuesday, Oct. 15; kids ages 1-2 on Wednesday, Oct. 16; and kids 1 and younger on Thursday, Oct. 17. All classes at 10 a.m.

# **Programming Room**

The East Carolina Digital Literacy Program will host an online safety and privacy program at the Pasquotank County Library Wednesday, Oct. 16 from 10 a.m. to noon. To register, call the library at 252-335-7536 or visit https://bit.ly/47CNVIw. Each participant who completes the pre-test and post-test will be entered in a drawing to win an iPad. Light refreshments will be served.

## Medicare outreach

The North Carolina State Health Plan will host a 2025 open enrollment Medicare outreach event at Museum of the Albemarle Friday, Oct. 18, from 10 a.m. to noon.

#### Hertford Ghost Walk

Masonic Lodge 106 and Church of the Holy Trinity will host the Historic Ghost Walk in Hertford Friday and Saturday, Oct. 18-19 from 6:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. each night. Tickets are \$10 and available at the Perquimans Chamber of Commerce Office at 118 W Market St., Hertford; Tommy's Pizza at 309 Ocean S. Hertford; and Church of the Holy Trinity both nights of tour.

#### Red Cross blood drive

The American Red Cross will host a blood drive in the main room at Albemarle Area Association of Realtors in Elizabeth City, Monday, Oct. 21, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

## Computer help

The Pasquotank County Library will host computer assistance program on PowerPoint Monday, Oct. 21; PowerPoint on Tuesday, Oct. 22; Google Docs 2 on Wednesday, Oct. 23; and Word 2 on Thursday, Oct. 24. All programs at 4 p.m. and require pre-registration by calling Mike at 335-7536.

#### Library storytime

The Pasquotank County Library will host a storytime program on the theme "Cake" for kids ages 3-5 with an adult on Tuesday, Oct. 22; kids ages 1-2 on Wednesday, Oct. 23; and kids 1 and younger on Thursday, Oct. 24. All classes at 10 a.m.

## **Programming Room**

The East Carolina Digital Literacy Program will host a program on how to search for trusted online sites at the Pasquotank County Library Wednesday, Oct. 23 from 10 a.m. to noon. To register, call the library at 252-335-7536 or visit https://bit.ly/47CNVIw. Each participant who completes the pre-test and post-test will be entered in a drawing to win an iPad. Light refreshments will be served.

#### Red Cross blood drives

The American Red Cross will host blood drives in the Sentara Albemarle Medical Center education rooms Wednesday, Oct. 23 from noon to 5 p.m.; JP Knapp Early College High School gym in Currituck Monday, Oct. 28 from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.; the B&M Contractors, Inc. training room in Elizabeth City on Tuesday, Oct. 29, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.; and the City Road United Methodist Church fellowship hall in Elizabeth City Thursday, Oct. 31, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

## **Programming Room**

The East Carolina Digital Literacy Program will host a program on how to use healthcare online at the Pasquotank County Library Wednesday, Oct. 23 from 10 a.m. to noon. Students will learn how to use telehealth. To register, call the library at 252-335-7536 or visit https://bit.ly/47CNVIw. Each participant who completes the pre-test and post-test will be entered in a drawing to win an iPad. Light refreshments will be served.

## **Community Olympics**

The Boys & Girls Club will host its Community Olympic Games at 108 East Ward St., Elizabeth City, Thursday, Oct. 24. Contact: ejmitchell@bgc-albemarle.org or call 252-216-5966.

#### YMCA Golf Classic

The 18th annual YMCA Golf Classic to benefit the Y's All Kids Swim Program will be held at the Pines of Elizabeth City, Friday, Oct. 25. Donations raised by the tournament will allow Albemarle Family YMCA to offer free swim lessons to area children. Check-in is 11 a.m. and shotgun start tee-off is at noon. Team of four costs \$450, individuals are \$113, and mulligans are \$10 each with a limit of two per player. Register and payment due Oct. 15. Send to Jane Snyder, Albemarle Family YMCA, 1240 N. Road St., Elizabeth City, 27909 or email jsnyder@ymcashr.org.

#### Computer help

The Pasquotank County Library will host computer assistance program on Google Docs Monday, Oct. 28; mouse and keyboarding on Tuesday, Oct. 29; Google Drive on Wednesday, Oct. 30; and PowerPoint on Thursday, Oct. 31. All programs at 4 p.m. and require pre-registration by calling Mike at 335-7536.

## Soil and water programs

The Northeast Ag Expo will sponsor a workshop for farmers on Tuesday, Oct. 29 at 8 a.m. at the Pasquotank Extension Office in Elizabeth City. Attendees will learn from FSA, Soil and Water and NRCS about various available programs and deadlines as well as the resources these agencies offer area farmers. To register, contact the Perquimans Center of NC Extension at 252-426-5428.

#### Library storytime

The Pasquotank County Library will host a storytime program on the theme "Halloween" for kids ages 3-5 with an adult on Tuesday, Oct. 29; kids ages 1-2 on Wednesday, Oct. 30; and kids 1 and younger on Thursday, Oct. 31. All classes at 10 a.m.

## Landslide to perform

The Elizabeth City Area Chamber of Commerce will host its Appreciation & Celebration Extravaganza featuring Landslide, a Fleetwood Mac tribute band, at Sagos on the River Nov. 9 from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. Drew Gregory and Chris Betts will be guest performers. Tickets are \$100, corporate tables are \$900.

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#### • Citation (aglc Style)

Julian Eure, 'What's Up', *Daily Advance, The* (online), 2 Oct 2024 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?</a> p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BFBB838F1A8FD8>



# Duke Energy pledges donations for storm relief

October 2, 2024 | Daily Courier, The (Forest City, NC) Author: STAFF REPORTS | Section: Helene | 202 Words OpenURL Link

Duke energy released a statement Wednesday announcing donations to local non-profits in the wake of Hurricane Helene

The statement reads:

"As Duke Energy continues to make progress restoring power to customers, we recognize our communities will require time and resources to recover and rebuild from Hurricane Helene.

"Duke Energy has announced a \$1 million commitment to nonprofits providing vital assistance to affected communities across the Southeast.

"In North Carolina, the Duke Energy Foundation has made a lead grant to the North Carolina Disaster Relief Fund at the United Way of North Carolina.

"Funding will aid a variety of organizations providing food, shelter, and other urgent needs, ensuring that relief efforts reach those who need it most. Duke Energy Foundation will continue making donations responsive to evolving needs as communities recover and nonprofits stand up their short- and long-term efforts. Read the full press release.

"This additional funding builds upon the Foundation's work ahead of the storm and year-round commitment to preparedness and resiliency.

"Organizations engaged in disaster relief are welcome to send funding inquiries to foundation@duke-energy.com.

"We have over 2,400 folks working to restore service in our area this morning and are making progress. With nearly all critical locations restored, we are now focused on restoring our largest outages."

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## • Citation (aglc Style)

STAFF REPORTS, 'Duke Energy pledges donations for storm relief', *Daily Courier, The* (online), 2 Oct 2024 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BFA4137AE875A8">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BFA4137AE875A8</a>



# Election officials plan for voting post-Helene

October 2, 2024 | Daily Courier, The (Forest City, NC) Author: SCOTT CARPENTER scarpenter@thedigitalcourier.com| Section: Archives | 601 Words OpenURL Link

RUTHERFORDTON — As rescue and recovery efforts continue after Hurricane Helene, North Carolina election officials are working to ensure voters affected by the storm can still cast their ballot in the 2024 general election.

Rutherford County Elections Director Dawn Lovelace is in contact with state officials, and she is confident voters who live in Lake Lure and Chimney Rock will be able to vote.

"Those in that area, who requested an absentee ballot, and have not yet received one, will likely not receive one. Anyone from that area, even if they will be staying with friends or family outside Rutherford County, are still legally eligible to vote as a citizen of Rutherford County, North Carolina," Lovelace said. "They should call and request another absentee ballot, and give the address where they are staying, even if out of county, and we will send them one."

Lovelace says in these instances, the original ballots that possibly were mailed, will be automatically invalidated.

"There is no possibility for 'double voting,' or anything like that," Lovelace said. "There are protocols and mechanisms in place, to ensure there is no 'double voting.' "

If they have their absentee ballot, they can decide not to use it, and vote at one of the two early voting polling locations, or they can vote on election day, at their precinct. The polling place for that area is the fire department in Bill's Creek community. Lovelace believes that fire department will be able to again serve as the polling place on Election Day.

She also stressed that if anyone in that area, because of the storm, lost their driver's license, or other approved photo identification (ID), will be exempt from the photo-identification requirement to vote.

Under state law, a voter who cannot provide an acceptable form of ID may fill out a Photo ID Exemption Form to explain why they cannot show ID. One of the permitted exceptions is for voters who are cannot because of a natural disaster that occurred within 100 days of an election and that resulted in a disaster declaration by the President of the United States, or the Governor of North Carolina.

This means that voters in or from the 25 counties (including Rutherford) under a disaster declaration may use this exception to the photo ID requirement, if they are unable to show ID when voting because of the natural disaster.

State election officials are still determining exactly how voting by mail will work in those in areas with temporarily non-functioning mail service.

"Our hearts go out to all North Carolinians affected by Hurricane Helene, including our neighbors, friends, and colleagues in Western North Carolina," said Karen Brinson Bell, executive director of the State Board of Elections. "When disasters strike elections, we use this mantra: 'We do not stop an election; we figure out how to proceed.' While we do not know exactly what is ahead, our guiding force between now and Election Day will be to do everything possible to ensure every eligible North Carolina voter can cast their ballot. Natural disasters have affected elections here in the recent past. As we did at those times, we will conduct a safe, secure, and successful election in 2024."

The State Board of Elections has launched a special webpage, NCSBE.gov/HELENE, as a source of information for voters affected by the hurricane. The webpage will include information on county board office closures, tips for

voters affected by the storm, and basic information about voting in this election. It will be updated regularly.

For storm victims, or anyone with questions or concerns about how they will be able to vote, may call the Rutherford County Board of Elections, 828-287-6030.

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#### • Citation (aglc Style)

SCOTT CARPENTER scarpenter@thedigitalcourier.com, 'Election officials plan for voting post-Helene', *Daily Courier, The* (online), 2 Oct 2024 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BFA41360353958">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BFA41360353958</a>>



# IRS announces disaster relief for those affected by hurricane

October 2, 2024 | Daily Courier, The (Forest City, NC) Author: STAFF REPORTS | Section: Helene | 1161 Words OpenURL Link

WASHINGTON — The Internal Revenue Service today announced disaster tax relief for all individuals and businesses affected by Hurricane Helene, including the entire states of Alabama, Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina and parts of Florida, Tennessee and Virginia.

Taxpayers in these areas now have until May 1, 2025, to file various federal individual and business tax returns and make tax payments. Among other things, this includes 2024 individual and business returns normally due during March and April 2025, 2023 individual and corporate returns with valid extensions and quarterly estimated tax payments.

The IRS is offering relief to any area designated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Besides all of Alabama, Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina, this currently includes 41 counties in Florida, eight counties in Tennessee and six counties and one city in Virginia.

Individuals and households that reside or have a business in any one of these localities qualify for tax relief. The same relief will be available to other states and localities that receive FEMA disaster declarations related to Hurricane Helene. The current list of eligible localities is always available on the Tax relief in disaster situations page on IRS.gov.

Filing and payment relief

The tax relief postpones various tax filing and payment deadlines that occurred beginning on Sept. 22, 2024, in Alabama; Sept. 23 in Florida; Sept. 24 in Georgia; Sept. 25 in North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia; and Sept. 26 in Tennessee. In all of these states, the relief period ends on May 1, 2025 (postponement period). As a result, affected individuals and businesses will have until May 1, 2025, to file returns and pay any taxes that were originally due during this period.

This means, for example, that the May 1, 2025, deadline will now apply to:

Any individual or business that has a 2024 return normally due during March or April 2025.

Any individual, business or tax-exempt organization that has a valid extension to file their 2023 federal return. The IRS noted, however, that payments on these returns are not eligible for the extra time because they were due last spring before the hurricane occurred.

2024 quarterly estimated income tax payments normally due on Jan. 15, 2025, and 2025 estimated tax payments normally due on April 15, 2025.

Quarterly payroll and excise tax returns normally due on Oct. 31, 2024, and Jan. 31 and April 30, 2025.

In addition, the IRS is also providing penalty relief to businesses that make payroll and excise tax deposits. Relief periods vary by state. Visit the Around the Nation page for details.

The Disaster assistance and emergency relief for individuals and businesses page has details on other returns, payments and tax-related actions qualifying for relief during the postponement period. Among other things, this means that any of these areas that previously received relief following Tropical Storm Debby will now have those deadlines further postponed to May 1, 2025.

The IRS automatically provides filing and penalty relief to any taxpayer with an IRS address of record located in the disaster area. These taxpayers do not need to contact the agency to get this relief.

It is possible an affected taxpayer may not have an IRS address of record located in the disaster area, for example, because they moved to the disaster area after filing their return. In these unique circumstances, the affected taxpayer could receive a late filing or late payment penalty notice from the IRS for the postponement period. The taxpayer should call the number on the notice to have the penalty abated.

In addition, the IRS will work with any taxpayer who lives outside the disaster area but whose records necessary to meet a deadline occurring during the postponement period are located in the affected area. Taxpayers qualifying for relief who live outside the disaster area need to contact the IRS at 866-562-5227. This also includes workers assisting the relief activities who are affiliated with a recognized government or philanthropic organization. Disaster area tax preparers with clients located outside the disaster area can choose to use the Bulk Requests from Practitioners for Disaster Relief option, described on IRS.gov.

#### Additional tax relief

Individuals and businesses in a federally declared disaster area who suffered uninsured or unreimbursed disaster-related losses can choose to claim them on either the return for the year the loss occurred (in this instance, the 2024 return normally filed next year), or the return for the prior year (the 2023 return filed this year). Taxpayers have extra time – up to six months after the due date of the taxpayer's federal income tax return for the disaster year (without regard to any extension of time to file) – to make the election. For individual taxpayers, this means Oct. 15, 2025. Be sure to write the FEMA declaration number on any return claiming a loss. See Publication 547, Casualties, Disasters, and Thefts, for details.

Qualified disaster relief payments are generally excluded from gross income. In general, this means that affected taxpayers can exclude from their gross income amounts received from a government agency for reasonable and necessary personal, family, living or funeral expenses, as well as for the repair or rehabilitation of their home, or for the repair or replacement of its contents. See Publication 525, Taxable and Nontaxable Income, for details.

Additional relief may be available to affected taxpayers who participate in a retirement plan or individual retirement arrangement (IRA). For example, a taxpayer may be eligible to take a special disaster distribution that would not be subject to the additional 10% early distribution tax and allows the taxpayer to spread the income over three years. Taxpayers may also be eligible to make a hardship withdrawal. Each plan or IRA has specific rules and guidance for their participants to follow.

The IRS may provide additional disaster relief in the future.

The tax relief is part of a coordinated federal response to the damage caused by this storm and is based on local damage assessments by FEMA. For information on disaster recovery, visit disasterassistance.gov.

Reminder about tax return preparation options

Eligible individuals or families can get free help preparing their tax return at Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) or Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) sites. To find the closest free tax help site, use the VITA Locator Tool or call 800-906-9887. Note that normally, VITA sites cannot help claim disaster losses.

To find an AARP Tax-Aide site, use the AARP Site Locator Tool or call 888-227-7669.

Any individual or family whose adjusted gross income (AGI) was \$79,000 or less in 2023 can use IRS Free File's guided tax software at no cost. There are products in English and Spanish.

Another Free File option is Free File Fillable Forms. These are electronic federal tax forms, equivalent to a paper

1040 and are designed for taxpayers who are comfortable filling out IRS tax forms. Anyone, regardless of income, can use this option.

MilTax, a Department of Defense program, offers free return preparation software and electronic filing for federal tax returns and up to three state income tax returns. It's available for all military members and some veterans, with no income limit.

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## • Citation (aglc Style)

STAFF REPORTS, 'IRS announces disaster relief for those affected by hurricane', *Daily Courier, The* (online), 2 Oct 2024 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BFA413897CC988">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BFA413897CC988</a>



# What it's like to be an electric lineman during a major storm event like Hurricane Helene

October 2, 2024 | Daily Courier, The (Forest City, NC) Author: Grey Scheer Retired Director of Community Relations Blue Ridge Energy | Section: Opinion | 1120 Words OpenURL Link

Hurricane Helene passed through here almost a week ago. Technically, it wasn't a hurricane at that point, but the damage it caused rivals the damage typically seen in coastal landfall areas.

Thousands of homes and businesses are still without electricity, and tempers are rising. Immediately after storms, as people get to survey the damage themselves, there is a general grace period that we all give the electric utilitywe can see how bad it is and how much work has to be done.

On the first day without power, the complaints were sparse. On day two, the stress and hardships start to amplify. Food spoils, toilets may not flush, and showers become cold. It gets hot and humid. It is scary at night to be in such darkness. Kids don't have enough to keep them busy. On day three, you typically start seeing some restoration progress and start asking, "Why not my home, my neighborhood?"

Usually, by day four or five, without electricity, the mood becomes dark (no pun intended). The complaints get louder and more frequent. We are getting to this point with Helene now.

Now may be a good time to provide insight into the life of the electric linemen who are working tirelessly to get your power back on.

First of all, you should know that they are just like you. There is a very strong possibility that their homes do not have electricity either. Their families are at home experiencing the same hardships as you. They may have a tree on their house or a flooded basement, or other work that needs to be done. But they are out trying to help others first. It is their calling. It is tough, but they do it every day and do it well. It is not easy to walk away from their damage first, but they always do.

Secondly, you should know that the utility has a plan for this. As the storm approaches, operation personnel begin to prepare and know what to do as soon

as the actual damage is known. The utility had already called the backup crews and had them at the ready. Multiple factors can affect this action, including how far the crews have to travel to come to our aid. I'm sure the first utility crews on that list are battling their own outages, so the next utility in line gets the call. Often, the band of utilities to call will grow hundreds of miles before enough crews are secured. And the needed number likely grows after the first few days as the difficulties they face become more known. In addition to these other utility linemen, right-of-way contractors and contract line crews are part of the emergency response plan. And it is helpful to remember that all these linemen will likely travel to places that are having even more significant problems than right here as soon as all of our homes are back online.

Electric co-ops generally rely on other electric co-ops for assistance, as all co-op electric grid are built to similar standards, and this helps keep all the linemen safe. Likewise, investor-owned utilities like Duke Energy will rely on others like utilities.

Now that the visiting crews are here, how do they know what to fix first? Each visiting crew is assigned a "bird dog" that knows the circuits like the back of their hands. Usually, this involves your utility's linemen, engineers, other operations personnel, and even retired linemen who volunteer to help in situations like this. They know the circuits that need to be energized first based on the number of homes, or perhaps they serve hospitals, nursing homes, or emergency shelters. There is a plan that they try their best to follow. Doesn't it make sense to rebuild a circuit with sixty-two homes and a Dollar General before a circuit with just six homes? With Helene, there are many unusual

circumstances that make the restoration more difficult and lengthy: there are major transmission line problems preventing the power from getting to the substations; entire roads are washed away or blocked by tons and tons of mud and rock that have to be removed.

Feeding and lodging dozens, or even hundreds, of "new" employees also has to be taken into consideration. There is a plan for that, too. Most likely, the kind person you talk to on the phone or at the drive-thru window or work in an office in IT or accounting is busy cooking, making sandwiches, packing lunches, and delivering them out in the field all day long. Remember, sometimes no restaurants may be open either or they have run out of food. Frequently, your utility will try to get the crews in for breakfast or dinner at the utility or, if lucky, a restaurant. They use this opportunity to review important safety information and outline plans for the next

few days. It is also a good time to show appreciation for their efforts. These crews are likely working 10-12 hour shifts and eating their lunches on the go. They have to eat.

They also have to sleep. If you see utility line trucks parked at a motel, you should know that there are likely others still out working while these crews try to get some mandated rest. Your utility has a plan to keep as many crews working as possible to get your power back on.

Working major outages is more dangerous than any other time for a lineman. Their adrenaline is pumping—they want to get your power on as much as you do. The work situations are usually far from normal. I have seen linemen working in swamps with water up to their chests, pulling heavy wire through pastures in two feet of snow to climb a pole, and using a rope line to cross a swift water creek to reach the other side. Not to mention working in rain, snow, ice, blazing heat, and high winds.

There will soon be complaints that more of the wires should be underground. Underground is good, but it is more expensive to build, and your electric rates would reflect that. Several years ago, when an ice storm devastated the Charlotte area and power was off for weeks, the citizens demanded the NC Legislature investigate requiring Duke Energy to bury more lines. But when the cost to do this was revealed, the demands got quiet.

Many people will not get their power restored for many more days, and for some, it could be weeks. Your frustration is understandable. But so is the difficulty of the tasks for these linemen. They understand what you are going through and are working hard for you. If you see them out working, give them a thumbs up, a wave, or a high five (later when their work is done).

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#### • Citation (aglc Style)

Grey Scheer Retired Director of Community Relations Blue Ridge Energy, 'What it's like to be an electric lineman during a major storm event like Hurricane Helene', *Daily Courier, The* (online), 2 Oct 2024 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BF63D611D60A40">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BF63D611D60A40</a>



## Shelters are critical in aftermath of Helene

October 2, 2024 | Daily Courier, The (Forest City, NC) Author: SCOTT CARPENTER scarpenter@thedigitalcourier.com| Section: Archives | 1121 Words OpenURL Link

RUTHERFORDTON — Dozens of local residents have received meals, showers, and a safe place to rest, at the Rutherford County Emergency Shelter for those impacted by Hurricane Helene, at R-S Central High School.

The storm tore through western North Carolina Thursday night and Friday morning, Sept. 26 - 27. Some officials are now describing it as a storm of "biblical proportions," and the worst natural disaster western North Carolina has experienced in at least a hundred years.

The storm impacted all of Rutherford County with by far the worst devastation in the Chimney Rock Village, Lake Lure, Hickory Nut Gorge area.

Many of those whose homes were damaged or destroyed, or had power knocked out are finding some refuge at the storm shelter at the high school in Rutherfordton.

Some have made their way there in their own vehicles, while others were brought in by transit bus directly from the hardest hit areas. There are couples, single adults, even some children and a few pets.

This shelter was originally set up by Rutherford County Emergency Management and the Rutherford County Department of Social Services (DSS). By the end of this week, this shelter, and another specialized shelter at Chase Middle School for those who are oxygen dependent and without electricity at their homes, will be run by the American Red Cross, with support from DSS. These shelters are operating under overall coordination from FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency).

The main shelter at R-S Central High opened on Friday afternoon Sept. 27, after the storm passed through. DSS staff, volunteers and those in need, are mainly in the central commons area of the main building, with a sleeping area in the gym.

"We have had an outpouring of support. It's been amazing," DSS director Delores Hunt said Tuesday. "Members of the community, who want to help, have brought cakes, pies, chili and cornbread, soup, all kinds of food, as well as bottled water. People want to help."

Some local law enforcement officials have even brought grills and cooked burgers and hot dogs.

In total, about 30 DSS staff have been working the shelters at different times. They are staffed 24 hours. The volunteers have also proven to be critical.

People arrive at the main shelter with different needs.

"Some simply need to get something to eat and get a few supplies," Hunt said. "They are able to rest, collect their thoughts, gather some supplies and then they move on. Others are at the shelter desperately hoping for news of loved ones. Some have no safe place to stay, so they spend a night or two there."

Many of them, officials say, just need to see some friendly faces. They need a break from the crisis surrounding them.

"I know of one women who was so upset, full of anxiety, about the possibility of losing everything," Hunt said. "We have people here trained in crisis counseling, and we were able to help her, reduce her stress."

Kayla Fox is the DSS official who specifically is coordinating the shelters.

"Most all of the people at the high school shelter are from the Hickory Nut Gorge area," Fox said. "They are anxious, stressed. Some are quiet, but some are more eager to talk. People are just really scared."

Fox says all are appreciative to have the shelter available. Many, she said, don't really have a plan for what's next.

"Everything, for many of them, seems up in the air," Fox said.

Hunt says all of her staff who are working the shelters, have a heart for helping others. While those in need, are enduring trauma and emotional pain, she said it is often emotionally and mentally draining for the workers and volunteers as well.

Fox said she is glad to be coordinating the shelters, and she understands it is important work. And there are indeed some moments that reinforce just how important it is.

"I get chills, right now, when I talk about, seeing some of the reunions that have taken place over the last few days here in the main shelter," Fox said. "I'm thinking of one in particular... it was a man and a woman. The sobbing, the hugs. I can't really explain how it felt to witness that."

Hunt says what is happening in the shelters is beautiful.

Because cell service remains spotty, one of the volunteers, Hunt said, has taken the cell phones of those in need and walked yards away from the building until he gets a cell signal and then calls the family member to let them know their loved ones are safe and in the shelter.

"This work can take a toll on the staff and volunteers," Hunt said. "There is always a danger of secondary trauma for them, so I try to make sure that our staff and volunteers also take care of themselves. It is ok to take a step back, to take a break, and acknowledge how hard this can be."

Hunt is grateful for all the volunteers and community support. She noted that CNA students (certified nursing assistant), have been volunteering at the specialized shelter at Chase Middle School for those who are oxygen-dependent.

"These experiences are eye-opening for all of the workers, and volunteers," Hunt said. "I am grateful for this community, and I want to encourage everyone to continue to show kindness, patience, and empathy, because people are suffering. But this county is strong and resilient, when we come together."

County leaders have praised the work of DSS and all the emergency responders.

"They continue to do a phenomenal job serving the temporary residents of these shelters, which has been challenging considering one has not had power, and they are operating with generators," said Rutherford County Manager Steve Garrison. "We are extremely grateful to Rutherford County Schools (RCS) Superintendent Dr. David Sutton and his team for partnering with our Emergency Management staff for permitting the use of their facilities to house our temporary shelters."

Rutherford County Commission Chairman Bryan King said, "this is the most devastating natural disaster in Rutherford County, in the last 100 years."

He noted that the extreme difficulty in communication in the first couple of days of the event, led to some delays.

"That infrastructure breakdown made the situation harder, made it worse," King said. "All the various entities are better able to work more efficiently now."

He noted that while much progress is being made, many people are still hurting, many are in need of help.

"Our citizens are coming together to help their community, and working with each other," he said. "I am grateful to be a resident of Rutherford County, where people do care for each other."

For the most up-to-date information on storm recovery and available resources, citizens are urged to visit social media, including the Facebook pages, of Rutherford County NC government, Rutherford County NC Emergency Management, or Rutherford County NC Department of Social Services.

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# • Citation (aglc Style)

SCOTT CARPENTER scarpenter@thedigitalcourier.com, 'Shelters are critical in aftermath of Helene', *Daily Courier, The* (online), 2 Oct 2024 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BFA41374B3AF18">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BFA41374B3AF18</a>



#### Western NC calls out for aid

October 2, 2024 | Daily Dispatch, The (Henderson, NC) Author: Tyler Davis tdavis@hendersondispatch.com 252-436-2839 | Section: Archives | 555 Words OpenURL Link

HENDERSON — Vance County's Clerk of Superior Court Henry Gupton set up a trailer outside the Sheriff's Office on Church Street Tuesday morning. A few hours later, it was nearly filled with bottles of water, canned goods, toiletries, cleaning supplies, childcare supplies and other essentials.

Gupton will be driving his trailer up to Flat Rock on Thursday, where it'll be delivered to victims of Hurricane Helene by air.

"I can't imagine what it'll look like when I get there," he said.

Indeed — the enormity of the devastation out west is hard to put into words. "Catastrophic," "post-apocalyptic" are the words many people are using, and photos and footage from news outlets onsite seem to show as much.

In North Carolina, 33 people have died as a result of the storm, with dozens more reported missing, according to the state Department of Public Safety. The Federal Emergency Management Agency has delivered about one million liters of water and more than 600,000 meals to North Carolina.

The whole state seems to be mobilizing to deliver much-needed supplies to the folks in the mountains. Gupton is just one of them. Clerks of courts in adjacent counties are following suit.

The City of Henderson has four drop-off sites for donations around town — City Hall at 134 Rose Avenue and the intersection of South Chestnut and Breckenridge streets will be open from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. until Oct. 8. Henderson Fruit and Produce at 1215 Old Norlina Road and Mast Family Drug Center at 418 Dabney Drive will be collecting donations during normal business hours until Oct. 8.

Mayor Melissa Elliott put out a statement saying she "understands the need for a boots-on-the-ground effort to assist in times of uncertainty and disaster." The city has partnered with those organizations to bring a ray of hope to victims of the storm, she wrote.

Beyond those four sites, Rebuilding Hope at 414 Raleigh Road will be collecting goods from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekdays. Zeb Vance Elementary School at 4800 Raleigh Road, Vance Charter School at 2090 Ross Mill Road, Aycock Elementary School at 305 Carey Chapel Road and Fred's Towing and Transport at 340 Industry Drive will be collecting donations until Friday.

The Warren County government and sheriff's office are collecting goods at every volunteer fire department in the county, including Cokesbury VFD and Littleton VFD, until Friday — the times of operation depend on the station.

Warren County Emergency Services and Tar Heel Tire at 890 U.S. 158 Bypass and 130 Tar Heel Avenue, respectively, will be open until 5 p.m. Friday. Hardware Café at 106 Main Street will be open until 3 p.m. on that day.

Warren County folks should direct further questions to mcoffman@caststonesystems.com.

Goods will be boxed on Thursday and shipped out on Friday.

"Even the smallest donations can have a significant difference to those impacted by this devastating storm," the county wrote in a press release.

Meanwhile, the Granville County Sheriff's Office has delivered a trailer to Buncombe County, and the Fire Chief's Association have nearly filled another with a second ready to begin collecting donations.

Oxford has two sites open from 8 a.m. till dusk — EmergeOrtho Parking Lot at 107 East McClanahan Street and Stovall Volunteer Fire Department at 204 US Highway 15.

Henderson Fire Department will be sending a few members of its roster out to affected regions to provide some hands-on assistance.

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## • Citation (aglc Style)

Tyler Davis tdavis@hendersondispatch.com 252-436-2839, 'Western NC calls out for aid', *Daily Dispatch, The* (online), 2 Oct 2024 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BFA31D54E8AD28">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BFA31D54E8AD28</a>



# Victim Assistance Centers opening to aid storm victims

October 2, 2024 | Daily Record, The (Dunn, NC) Author: For the Record | Section: News | 222 Words OpenURL Link

RALEIGH — As North Carolina continues to respond to the devastating impacts in the aftermath of Hurricane Helene, Insurance Commissioner Mike Causey has announced the opening of two Victim Assistance Centers (VAC) this week and next.

A VAC will be open from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 4, and Monday, Oct. 7, at the department's North Wilkesboro office, located at 307 Ninth St., North Wilkesboro, N.C. 28659.

A second VAC will be open from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Monday, Oct. 7, at the department's Gastonia Regional Office, located at 1422 Burtonwood Drive, Suite 101, Gastonia, N.C. 28054.

"These Victim Assistance Centers will help to give in-person and on-the-ground recovery assistance and provide insurance-related support to those directly impacted by Hurricane Helene," Commissioner Causey said. "Our goal is to open more VACs in other locations and to provide valuable resources in the coming days and weeks."

NCDOI is currently coordinating with law enforcement agencies, emergency management, fire departments, rescue squads, charities, churches and civic groups to assist victims. NCDOI will be announcing future ways to assist with insurance claims and other needs in the future.

For assistance with insurance matters, contact the N.C. Department of Insurance's Consumer Division at 1-855-408-1212. Check the Department of Insurance website for continuing updates: www.ncdoi.gov/helene.

You can also donate to the North Carolina Disaster Relief fund at: https://pay.payitgov.com/ncdonations.

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#### • Citation (aglc Style)

For the Record, 'Victim Assistance Centers opening to aid storm victims', *Daily Record, The* (online), 2 Oct 2024 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BFA50732DC7E18">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BFA50732DC7E18</a>



# **Avery-Mitchell Correctional Institution evacuated**

October 2, 2024 | Daily Record, The (Dunn, NC) Author: For the Record | Section: News | 237 Words OpenURL Link

RALEIGH — The North Carolina Department of Adult Correction evacuated more than 800 men incarcerated at Avery-Mitchell Correctional Institution in Spruce Pine.

NCDAC began the evacuation operation Tuesday morning, and the last buses arrived at their new locations Tuesday night. The evacuation became necessary due to long timeframes for water and power restoration at the prison.

NCDAC transferred 841 male offenders from Avery-Mitchell CI to seven different prisons:

Scotland Correctional Institution — Laurinburg

Tabor Correctional Institution — Tabor City

Nash Correctional Institution — Nashville

Eastern Correctional Institution — Maury

Southern Correctional Institution — Troy

Maury Correctional Institution — Maury

Harnett Correctional Institution — Lillington.

All offenders in storm-impacted prisons are safe, and NCDAC is taking appropriate steps to ensure continued health and safety of all staff and offenders. Family and friends are asked not to call the prisons to check on a loved one. Relocated offenders will be able to make phone calls after they arrive at their destinations.

The NCDAC Offender Locator will be updated within 24 hours to indicate where individuals are temporarily rehoused.

On Monday, NCDAC evacuated just over 400 female offenders from Western Correctional Center for Women in Swannanoa and Black Mountain Substance Abuse Treatment Center for Women to:

Anson Correctional Institution — Polkton

N.C. Correctional Institution for Women — Raleigh

North Piedmont Confinement in Response to Violation Center — Lexington.

The duration of all relocations will depend on the time required restore water and power.

For more information on NCDAC actions in response to Hurricane Helene, visit dac.nc.gov/helene.

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