

Hurricane Irene Recovery Update ~ September 20, 2011

Summary

After Hurricane Irene struck North Carolina last month, Gov. Bev Perdue requested and received a federal disaster declaration for **individual assistance** for 35 counties. The counties include:

Beaufort	Currituck	Hertford	New Hanover	Pitt
Bertie	Dare	Hyde	Northampton	Tyrrell
Brunswick	Duplin	Johnston	Onslow	Vance
Camden	Edgecombe	Jones	Pamlico	Warren
Carteret	Gates	Lenoir	Pasquotank	Washington
Chowan	Greene	Martin	Pender	Wayne
Craven	Halifax	Nash	Perquimans	Wilson

The declaration means people whose primary homes or personal property were damaged or destroyed by Irene may receive assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Through FEMA, money is available to help replace some personal property, pay for temporary housing and make essential repairs to homes. Storm survivors also may qualify for low-interest loans from the U.S. Small Business Administration to help homeowners and renters replace personal property and repair their homes.

In addition, 37 counties received a federal disaster declaration for **public assistance**, which helps local governments and certain nonprofit organizations recoup costs for storm response, debris removal and infrastructure damage. Those counties include the **35 counties listed above as well as Columbus and Sampson counties**.

Public Assistance is a cost-share reimbursement program in which FEMA covers 75 percent and the state covers the remaining costs. These recovery programs are part of a robust team effort by local, state, federal and voluntary agencies.

Food Assistance

Registration for the Disaster Food and Nutrition Services program, through the U.S. Department of Agriculture, has ended.

The program was made available to individuals affected by Hurricane Irene not normally eligible for Food and Nutrition Services benefits, which are commonly referred to as food stamps.

Recipients living in one of the 35 eligible counties may use their Disaster Food and Nutrition Services benefits through Sept. 30 to purchase hot prepared meals from retailers that are located in counties authorized to accept Electronic Bank Transfer benefits.

Housing Assistance

North Carolina Emergency Management and FEMA are working with local communities to find short-term and long-term temporary housing for residents displaced by the disaster. The primary method is to help survivors while their homes are repaired or rebuilt. The first solution is to provide financial aid for rental assistance. (This keeps money in the local communities and takes advantage of existing inventory.)

Another possibility is to house people in a hotel or motel for a short period of time while their home is cleaned or repaired.

Who is Eligible

- **Renters** without renter's insurance in any of the 35 counties designated for federal Individual Assistance,
- **Homeowners** in any of the 35 counties designated for federal Individual Assistance who have a homeowner's policy that does not cover temporary rental assistance.

Note: the residence must be the survivor's primary home

Types of Housing

1. Temporary rental assistance

Eligible applicants receive two months of rental assistance. Additional assistance may be available for those who still need help after the initial two months. This is the primary temporary housing solution used by FEMA.

Survivors who receive temporary rental assistance will be referred to rentals that are located, preferably, within a reasonable distance of their damaged homes.

2. Transitional Shelter Assistance

In certain areas where there is a shortage of rentals, survivors who, due to damage or power outage, cannot live in their residences are eligible to stay in hotels or motels for up to two weeks while FEMA looks for other available temporary rental solutions. This program is available for Hurricane Irene survivors whose primary residence is in: **Beaufort, Dare, Halifax, Hyde, Pamlico and Tyrrell** counties. Families in the six designated counties are being contacted by FEMA with information regarding the Transitional Shelter Assistance program.

The hotel bill is paid for on behalf of the survivors by the state and the federal government.

In order to qualify for the Transitional Shelter Assistance program, survivors must first apply for federal assistance through FEMA and meet the following requirements:

- They must be eligible for federal disaster assistance, and
- The survivor's primary residence must be in one of the six counties where the transitional shelter program has been activated.

Rental assistance has been approved for 4,813 renters or homeowners. Currently, 3,601 rental resources have been identified.

How To Get Help

Hurricane survivors in the impacted counties are urged to register with FEMA for disaster assistance, regardless of the degree of loss or status of insurance. They can register by:

1. Phone at **800-621-FEMA (3362)** from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. Assistance is available in most languages. People who have a speech disability or are deaf or hard of hearing may call (TTY) **800-462-7585**; users of **711** or Video Relay Service can call **800-621-3362**.
2. Online at www.DisasterAssistance.gov.
3. Going to m.fema.gov with a tablet or smartphone.

Disaster Recovery Centers

Disaster recovery centers are set up as a place for survivors to get one-on-one help applying for disaster assistance or referrals to programs that can meet their needs. The recovery centers are open from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. on Sunday.

<p>Beaufort County Mid-Atlantic Safety Council 2871 Highway 17 South Chocowinity, N.C. 27817</p>	<p>Hyde County Hyde County Dept. of Social Services 1430 Main St. Swan Quarter, N.C. 27885</p>
<p>Carteret County Carteret County Health Department 3820 Bridges St., Suite A Morehead City, N.C. 28557</p>	<p>Lenoir County Cooperative Extension Service Center 1791 Pink Hill Road Kinston, N.C. 28504</p>
<p>Craven County Former Eckerd Drug Store 710 Degraffenreid Ave. New Bern, N.C. 28560</p>	<p>Nash County (Open Sept. 20- 23) Nash County Agricultural Center 1006 Eastern Ave. Nashville, N.C. 27856</p>
<p>Currituck County Cooperative Extension Service Center 120 Community Way Barco, N.C. 27917</p>	<p>Northampton County (Open Sept. 22 – 26) Northampton Cultural & Wellness Center 9536 Highway 305 North Jackson, N.C. 27845</p>
<p>Dare County Dare County Center 950 Marshall C. Collins Drive, Room 103 Manteo, N.C. 27954</p>	<p>Onslow County Former Navy Federal Credit Union 201 Wilmington Hwy. Jacksonville, NC 28540</p>
<p>Dare County – closes Sept. 20 Rodanthe Community Center 23186 Myrna Peters Road Rodanthe, N.C. 279268</p>	<p>Pamlico County Grantsboro Town Hall 10628 Highway 55 Grantsboro, N.C. 28529</p>
<p>Greene County Snow Hill Fire Dept. 201 Carolina Drive Snow Hill, N.C. 28580</p>	<p>Pitt County Agricultural Extension Center 403 Government Circle Greenville, N.C. 27834</p>
<p>Halifax County Agriculture Building 359 Ferrell Lane Halifax, N.C. 27839</p>	<p>Tyrrell County Tyrrell Hall 906 Highway 64 East Columbia, N.C. 27925</p>
	<p>Washington County Plymouth Municipal Airport 1069 Airport Road Plymouth, N.C. 27962</p>

Other Resources

- **888-835-9966** – Governor’s Hotline for donations, volunteers and recovery questions.
- **www.nccrimecontrol.org** – Click on Hurricane Irene tab
- Follow the state on Facebook for North Carolina Emergency Management or Twitter @NCEmergency.

Inspectors

Inspectors from FEMA are currently contacting disaster applicants whose primary residence or property sustained damage from Hurricane Irene in the designated North Carolina counties.

Inspectors are private contractors who wear official FEMA identification. There is no charge for the inspection and inspectors do not make a determination on a survivor’s application for help. It's important to keep the scheduled appointment to make sure the assistance process moves quickly.

Disaster Unemployment Assistance

Survivors in all of the 35 federally declared counties for the Individual Assistance program (see list in Summary section) who became unemployed as a direct result of Hurricane Irene, may be eligible for unemployment insurance benefits under the Disaster Unemployment Assistance program. Business owners affected by the storm may also qualify for benefits.

Workers or business owners meeting the following criteria may be eligible for benefits:

- Individuals who are unemployed due to the disaster and do not qualify for regular unemployment insurance benefits
- Self-employed individuals and small business owners who lost income due to the disaster
- Individuals who were prevented from working due to an injury caused by the disaster
- Individuals who have become the major supplier of household income due to the disaster-related death or injury of the previous major supplier of household income
- Individuals who are unable to reach their job or self-employment location because they must travel through the affected area and are prevented from doing so by the disaster
- Individuals who were to begin work, but were prevented by the disaster

There is no waiting week period to file for benefits. Affected workers can receive benefits dated back to the week ending Sept. 3. DUA is funded entirely by the federal government.

- The deadlines to apply are:
 - **Sept. 30**-Beaufort, Carteret, Craven, Dare, Hyde, Pamlico and Tyrrell counties
 - **Oct. 3**-Halifax and Lenoir counties
 - **Oct. 5**-Bertie, Brunswick, Camden, Chowan, Currituck, Duplin, Edgecombe, Gates, Greene, Hertford, Johnston, Jones, Martin, Nash, New Hanover, Northampton, Onslow, Pasquotank, Perquimans, Pitt, Vance, Warren, Washington and Wilson counties
 - **Oct. 11**-Pender and Wayne counties

Individuals may contact the North Carolina Employment Security Commission by calling **866-795-8877** from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday to apply for DUA benefits. Individuals are encouraged to file as soon as possible. Email esc.ui.customerservice@ncesc.gov.

Debris Removal

The North Carolina Department of Transportation has begun a phased approach to debris removal in counties affected by Hurricane Irene. Contract crews are picking up storm-related debris along state-maintained roads in 17 counties, including: Beaufort, Carteret, Craven, Dare, Duplin, Edgecombe, Halifax, Hyde, Johnston, Nash, New Hanover, Onslow, Pamlico, Pender, Tyrell, Wilson and Wayne counties. Debris removal will proceed in other counties soon.

In order to make debris pickup quick and efficient, residents are asked to place debris along the side of the roadway as soon as possible. Debris may not be placed in travel lanes or in areas where it will block drainage or reduce visibility for motorists and pedestrians.

NCDOT asks residents to be patient while crews make their way through the counties and to be alert for large debris-clearing equipment in the roads.

The following should be kept in mind while collecting debris for removal:

- Survivors should check their property insurance policy because debris cleanup is often covered by insurance and arrangements for its collection will be handled by the insurance company,
- NCDOT will only collect vegetative debris, such as trees and limbs,
- Property owners are asked to cut storm-related tree branches into 5- or 6-foot pieces, if possible.

For the latest information for debris cleanup updates go to www.ncdot.gov.

Community Outreach

Community relations teams from North Carolina Emergency Management and Federal Emergency Management Agency are reaching out to survivors affected by Hurricane Irene.

Teams are in the designated counties, knocking on doors and attending meetings to share and gather information. The goal is twofold: to make sure renters, homeowners and small business owners know about available disaster assistance programs and to identify post-disaster needs.

Mitigation Education

FEMA mitigation advisors have displays set up at several home improvement stores. Survivors can learn more about ways to strengthen their homes against future storm damage by visiting these locations:

Sept. 19 to Sept. 25

- Home Depot, 5300 N. Croatan Highway, Kitty Hawk, N.C. 28590
- Lowe's Home Improvement, 1400 Lowe's Blvd., New Bern, N.C. 28562
- Lowe's Home Improvement, 3840 E. 10th St., Greenville, N.C. 27858

Crisis Counseling

Crisis counseling services have been approved and are available to persons affected by Hurricane Irene. Counseling for all ages can be arranged by calling **866-451-7760** between 8 a.m. and midnight, seven days a week.

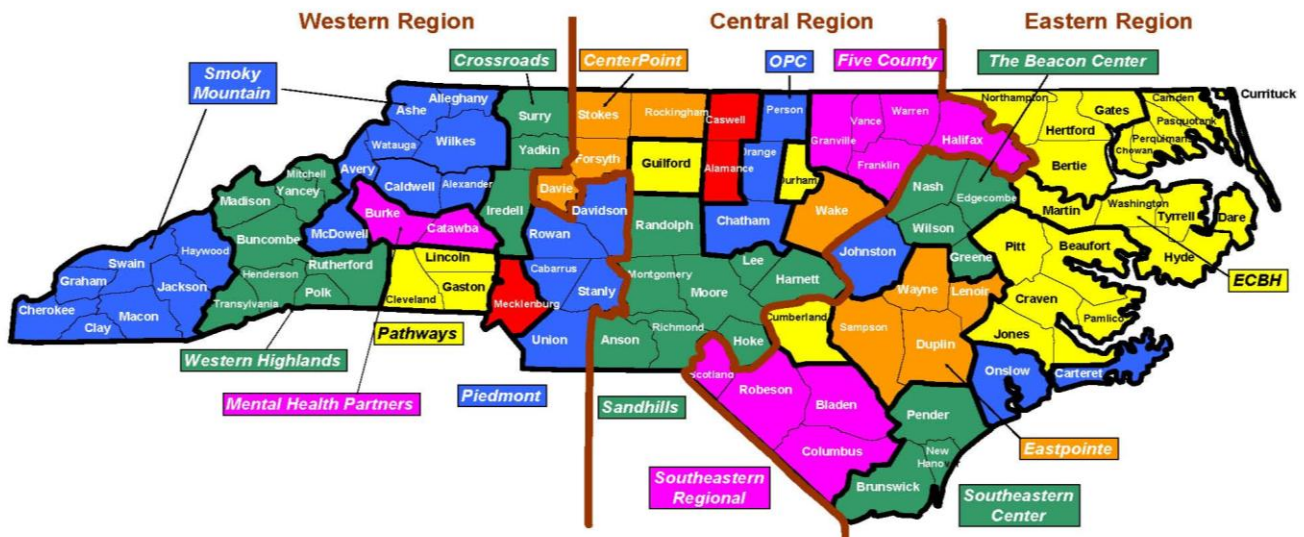
Callers are referred to a specially trained counselor in their county to get help with stress and changes in behavior caused by the storm. Referral services and short-term intervention counseling are confidential.

In the following counties help is provided by NC on the Road to Resilience: **Brunswick, Currituck, Duplin, Halifax, Lenoir, New Hanover, Onslow, Pender, Vance, Warren** and **Wayne** counties.

Help is provided by local mental health organizations in **Beaufort, Bertie, Camden, Carteret, Chowan, Craven, Currituck, Dare, Edgecombe, Gates, Greene, Hertford, Hyde, Johnston, Jones, Martin, Nash, Northampton, Pamlico, Pasquotank, Perquimans, Pitt, Tyrrell, Washington** and **Wilson** counties.

Local Management Entities (LMEs) are responsible for managing, coordinating, facilitating and monitoring the provision of mental health, developmental disabilities, and substance abuse services in the area that they serve. See chart below

Local Management Entities (LMEs) and their Member Counties and LME Team Liaisons As of February 7, 2011



Unless otherwise indicated, the LME name is the county name(s).

Reflects LMEs and Regions as of February 7, 2011

Farmer's Assistance

Local farmers are encouraged to apply for federal Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments before Sept. 30 to ensure they get federal aid if the hurricane affected their harvest this fall or next fall. A local producer can apply for SURE payments for their 2011 or 2012 harvests if their crops – located in a disaster-declared county or one contiguous to it – suffered a loss of at least 10 percent because of a natural disaster that took place “on or before” Sept. 30.

For more information, producers should contact:

- 1) Lenoir County FSA office at 252-523-0524, Ext. 2, or
- 2) Greene County FSA at 252-747-2968, or
- 3) Jones County at 252-448-2341, Ext. 2.

Public Assistance

Thirty-seven counties were declared eligible for FEMA's Public Assistance program to help reimburse local governments, eligible state agencies and certain eligible nonprofits for uninsured disaster-related infrastructure costs such as the removal of debris and the repair, restoration, reconstruction or replacement of eligible public facilities and infrastructure.

Eligible expenses are reimbursed on a cost-share basis, with FEMA funding 75 percent and the state paying 25 percent. Funding goes through the state for disbursement to local governments, state agencies and eligible nonprofit organizations.

Four teams will explain how eligible applicants should complete project worksheets that spell out the purpose, cost, timeline and other information about proposed projects. A tentative schedule for applicant briefings has been set by North Carolina Emergency Management:

Kickoff meetings will be held immediately or soon after the applicant briefings.

Appliance Replacement

Homeowners and small business operators can cut the cost of replacing storm-damaged appliances with new energy efficient, ENERGY STAR appliances through the North Carolina Hurricane Appliance Replacement Program (HARP).



The \$1.4 million will be distributed through applications made online via the N.C. Energy Office website, on a first-come, first serve basis. The website will indicate whether funds are still available. After all of the available funds have been reserved, a waiting list will start. Appliances eligible for the assistance include: central air conditioning systems; gas furnaces, heat pumps; gas storage water heaters, gas tankless water heaters, heat pump water heaters, solar water heaters, refrigerators, washing machines, dishwashers and freezers. Receipts must be dated on or after Aug. 28, 2011.

Consumers may go online or call a special telephone number to start the application process to receive their assistance. The link to the North Carolina HARP can be found at www.energync.net. Look for the blue Energy Star logo. Consumers without Internet access may call toll free to **877-826-8571**.

Legal Assistance

Those who can't afford an attorney and who run into a legal snag due to the hurricane in one of the 35 federally declared counties for the Individual Assistance program (see list in Summary section) can call **800-662-7407** weekdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Ask for Disaster Legal Services and a volunteer attorney will call back in 48 to 72 hours.



Disaster-related legal assistance is offered by the North Carolina Bar Association. The Young Lawyers Division of the North Carolina Bar Association is providing volunteer attorneys to help with legal complications that arise from the hurricane. Examples include:

- Advice regarding landlord/tenant issues
- Replacement of lost legal documents
- Advice about contracts disrupted by the hurricane
- Help with insurance disputes and other legal complications caused by the disaster