

- AVL WEEKLY NEWSLETTER - RECOVERY RESOURCES

MONDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2024



Hurricane Helene Recovery

Weekly Newsletter – Monday, October 28, 2024

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ASSISTANCE

FEMA

To apply:

- Online: DisasterAssistance.gov
- Mobile: FEMA app
- Phone: 800-621-3362 (FEMA)

For an accessible video on how to apply, visit: [FEMA Accessible: Three Ways to Register for FEMA Disaster Assistance](#) – YouTube (includes sign language for those residents who are hearing impaired)

FEMA is hiring:

- Local community members to join their team. Visit usajobs.gov and search "FEMA" as the keyword, and "North Carolina" as the location for more information.
- A Community Liaison for Buncombe County. The ideal candidate has close ties, relationships, and familiarity with, and lives in, Buncombe County. For more information about this position and to apply, please visit usajobs.gov and search "FEMA" as the keyword, and "North Carolina" as the location.

PROCESS

- Don't wait to start cleanup. Take photos of any damage, make a list of your losses, and keep all receipts to verify expenses caused by the disaster.
- File an insurance claim. Applicants who are insured for the disaster damage to their home must provide an insurance settlement or benefit documents to FEMA before being considered for federal assistance.
- After you apply, a FEMA inspector will contact you to schedule an appointment for inspection. Be sure to answer the phone. The inspector's phone number may be from out of state or show up on caller ID as "unavailable." During the scheduling process you may also identify if you require a reasonable accommodation, services including translation and ASL interpreters, are available to ensure effective communication with survivors.

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- Gather information for the inspection. Be prepared to show the inspector your photo identification; proof of ownership occupancy; a list of household occupants living in the home at the time of the disaster; all disaster-caused damage to the property; and your insurance policy. If you have photos of disaster damage or repair receipts, have those available too.
- Meet with the inspector. The inspection includes looking at disaster-damaged areas of your home and reviewing your records. The inspector will ask to verify the applicant's name, address, contact information, occupancy, ownership status and insurance coverage.
- You will receive a letter explaining FEMA's eligibility decision within 10 days after the inspector's visit. Be sure to read it closely; it may explain additional steps needed to continue with the process. If you are determined eligible for assistance, you may receive a U.S. Treasury check or direct deposit based on what you selected during your application.

INSPECTIONS

The below are videos that explain the inspection process. This occurs after someone has registered for assistance with FEMA. They are then contacted by an inspector who will come out and perform an inspection.

- [FEMA Housing Inspector Explains Inspection Process](#)
- [Facts About FEMA Home Inspections](#)

DECIPHERING YOUR FEMA LETTER

If you applied for FEMA assistance, you will receive a letter explaining FEMA's decision within 10 days. Read your letter carefully and stay in touch with FEMA. They may need more information to approve your application.

If you are approved, you may get funds by direct deposit, or a U.S. Treasury check based on which payment method you chose in the application. Your first payment may be for essentials, like food and water. You could also receive funds to hire a contractor to provide an estimate for home repairs. Stay in touch with FEMA even if you are approved. If your situation changes, you may be eligible for further disaster assistance.

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If you are NOT approved, FEMA may need additional information from you to support your application. This will be explained in your determination letter. Read the letter carefully. The fastest way to submit additional documents is to upload to your disaster assistance account at DisasterAssistance.gov.

Survivors have the right to appeal any FEMA decision or award amount. You can appeal any FEMA decision or award amount by sending documents that show you qualify and need more help. You can upload them to your already created FEMA account, mail them to FEMA at P.O. Box 10055, Hyattsville, MD 20782-8055, or fax them to 1.800.827.8112.

Documents may include receipts, bills, repair estimates, property titles or deeds, any other information that may support the reasons for the appeal

All pages of all documents must include your full name, current phone number and address, disaster number and FEMA application number, and the address of the disaster-damaged home.

If you are unable to appeal a decision yourself, someone may appeal on your behalf. This can be done by sending a written explanation for the appeal that is written by someone other than you. This must include their signature. FEMA will also need your written permission to share information about your application. You can do this by completing an Authorization for the Release of Information Under the Privacy Act form and sending it to FEMA. Call 1.800.621.3362 for more information.

DISASTER RECOVERY CENTERS

A Disaster Recovery Center is a one-stop shop where survivors can meet face-to-face with FEMA representatives, apply for FEMA assistance, receive referrals to local assistance in their area, apply with the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) for low-interest disaster loans, and more. They are open daily from 8 AM – 7 PM at:

- Cane Creek Pool, 590 Lower Bush Creek Rd.
- Swannanoa Fire Rescue, Bee Tree Fire Sub Station, 510 Bee Tree Rd.
- Buncombe County Sports Park, 58 Apac Dr. s services, and a mobile pharmacy, seven days a week from 9 AM – 5 PM.

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SERIOUS NEEDS ASSISTANCE

FEMA has given us clarification on eligibility for the \$750 Serious Needs Assistance and how to report it during registration.

It is recommended that you go to the Buncombe County Disaster Recovery Center (DRC) location at AC Reynolds High School, 1 Rocket Dr., in Asheville to ask questions about FEMA assistance and your application in person. It's open daily from 8 am -7 pm.

Even without damage, survivors are eligible for serious needs assistance if they are in a high-impact area; FEMA calls this "expedited serious needs assistance." All of Buncombe County is authorized for expedited serious needs assistance so damage does not matter for SNA or eSNA. Survivors must report a serious need to receive this assistance.

Survivors can report serious needs in two ways during registration:

- Selecting any of the options on the question "Do you need money to help with any of the following critical needs?"
 - Water, food, medication, or durable medical equipment
 - Infant formula, diapers, personal hygiene items, or gas
 - Costs to get to a shelter or other place because my home is unsafe

OR

- Selecting any response other than "my home" when asked "Where do you currently live or stay?"

Survivors can update their answers to these questions on disasterassistance.gov, by calling 800-621-3362 or visiting the Disaster Recovery Center FEMA has established at AC Reynolds High School.

It is important for you to follow up with FEMA. An initial denial does not stop the process. It is an indicator that something is missing or needs to be corrected on your application. FEMA will tell you the cause of your denial and help you submit the correct information or correct an application response to get the assistance you need.

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DIRECT TEMPORARY HOUSING ASSISTANCE

FEMA is providing Direct Temporary Housing Assistance (DTHA) to qualifying households in 25 counties. DTHA may be provided in three forms: Direct Lease, Multifamily Lease, and Repair and Transportable Temporary Housing Units. For more information on DTHA options and eligibility, click [here](#).

PRIVATE ROADS AND BRIDGES ASSISTANCE

If an individual had a privately owned road or bridge damaged or destroyed by Helene, federal assistance may be available for replacement or repairs.

To receive Home Repair Assistance for privately owned access routes, the following conditions must be met:

- A FEMA inspection determines repairs are necessary to provide drivable access to the primary residence.
- The applicant is responsible (or shares responsibility with other homeowners) for maintaining the privately owned access route to their primary residence.
- The privately-owned access route is the only way to reach the applicant's primary residence; repair (or replacement) of a secondary route is necessary for practical use (for example, it is impossible to access the residence without a bridge or road); or the safety of the occupants or the residence would be adversely affected because state or local government emergency equipment (ambulances, firetrucks) cannot reach the residence.

The fastest way to apply is online at DisasterAssistance.gov, via the FEMA app, or by calling 800,621.3362.

HOUSES OF WORSHIP

The Stafford Act has been revised to make Houses of Worship eligible to apply for potential funding to help with certain disaster-related costs under FEMA's Public Assistance grant program. FEMA will provide financial assistance only if the House of Worship is denied an SBA loan, or if the loan authorized is insufficient to cover repair costs. The first step is applying for SBA Disaster Assistance.

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IMPORTANT NOTES

- FEMA officials remain in communities and will resume door-to-door operations to help people impacted by these storms recover as quickly as possible following reports of threats on the ground.
- FEMA will never ask for money to help you
- All FEMA representatives wear official badges
- Beware of scammers pretending to be FEMA. If you believe you are the victim of a scam, report it immediately to your local police or sheriff's department, or contact the [Office of the Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division](#).
- When applying for FEMA assistance, residents may need to provide proof of identity, residence, and other documentation. [Click here](#) to find steps to help you replace important documents that were lost or damaged.
- While renewal dates have passed for some National Flood Insurance Program policyholders affected by Helene, they may be able to take steps that will renew their policy and receive immediate help. Policyholders who received flood damage from Helene should be sure to ask their insurance agent or company about advance claims payments to help start their recovery. Advance payments may be available of up to \$20,000 prior to a visit from an adjuster.
- The period to provide proof of loss requirements for policyholders has been extended from the standard 60 days to 120 days from the date of loss. FEMA also
- FEMA has authorized its [Write Your Own](#) insurance company partners and the direct to pay claims based on the adjuster's report without requiring policyholders to sign a proof of loss. When a policyholder seeks additional payment for any reason or disagrees with the adjuster report, they may still submit a signed proof of loss to the insurer along with supporting documentation, such as a contractor's estimate, bills, receipts, photographs, and other related documents.
- Anyone affected by Helene who has a National Flood Insurance Program flood insurance policy and has suffered flood damage should begin filing their claim now. Evacuated policyholders can still start their claim and provide specifics later once local officials say it's safe to return home.
- <https://www.fema.gov/disaster/4827/news-media>
- Claimants will receive a letter explaining FEMA's eligibility decision within 10 days after the inspector's visit. Be sure to read it closely, as it may explain additional steps needed to continue with the process.

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OTHER ASSISTANCE

One Buncombe Call Center:

The One Buncombe Call Center will begin operations on Wednesday, October 30, from 9 AM to 5 PM. Call 828.250.6100 with any questions relating to Hurricane Helene.

Blue Ridge Pride:

Blue Ridge Pride has launched several initiatives for the LGBTQIA2S+ community, including:

- Weekly Distribution (food, hygiene items, pet and baby supplies, cold weather items)
- 1:1 Financial Assistance (property rehab, evacuation, or lost wages support up to \$400/family, payable to payees. Grocery, hardware, and pharmacy gift cards also available)
- Mental Health Support: Coming in the week of 10/28, a local and queer Counseling Intern to see clients in West Asheville on a deeply affordable sliding scale (\$0-\$40).

For information on any of these, or more services provided, click [here](#).

Eblen Charities:

Eblen Charities (828.255.3066) is open from 9 at 23 Hamilton St., for assistance with gas vouchers, rent and mortgage assistance, medical assistance, water and food distribution, and clothing/cold-weather related item distribution.

Information on their Thanksgiving Food Giveaway and their Holiday Gift Giveaway will be released in early November, and residents are asked to review their social media channels for updated information.

State Farm:

In Buncombe County and Asheville, State Farm's Catastrophe Customer Care site is located at the Westgate Shopping Center, 66 Westgate Parkway. Claims personnel are available to assist with policyholder needs from 9 AM – 5 PM.

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Customers may initiate the claim process by contacting their State Farm agent by phone or in person. Customers can also report a claim 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, by calling 1-800-SFCLAIM (1-800-732-5246) or online at <https://www.statefarm.com/>.

If you have any questions or concerns about the State Farm storm response effort, please contact the Government Affairs Team at 828-308-2001.

Campaign for Southern Equality:

The LGBTQ+ Resource & Supply Center in the Campaign for Southern Equality offices, 20 Oak St., Asheville, will help the community access essential supplies and support during this time, including basic supplies and resources for LGBTQ+ and allied folks, queer-specific resources, and navigation support to help folks identify where else they can get help and better understand how our medical partners work. They are also providing coffee and snacks.

CELL SERVICE & WI-FI

Temporary Verizon cellular satellite trailers:

- YMCA: 30 Woodfin St
- Groce United Methodist Church: 954 Tunnel Rd

T-Mobile satellite cellular on light trucks (cellular service, Wi-Fi, and charging):

- Asheville Middle School: 211 S French Broad Ave
- Dr. Wesley Grant Sr. Southside Community Center: 285 Livingston St

ITDRC Wi-Fi hotspots and charging stations:

- Sam's Club: 645 Patton Ave
- Haw Creek Commons: 315 Old Haw Creek Rd

Additional Wi-Fi hotspots and charging stations:

- Justice Center parking lot: 35 Woodfin St
- YMCA Downtown Asheville: Woodfin St
- West Asheville Public Library: 942 Haywood Rd

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- Pack Memorial Library: 67 Haywood St
- Enka Library in Candler: 1404 Sand Hill Rd, Candler
- Citizen Vinyl: 14 O'Henry Ave
- Moxy Hotel: 61 Biltmore Ave
- The Plug Smoke Shop: 1356 Patton Ave
- Center for Craft: 67 Broadway St
- Mosaic Cafe: 1 Town Square Blvd, Suite 150, Biltmore Park
- DoubleTree in Montford: 199 Haywood St
- ALoft on Biltmore Ave: 51 Biltmore Ave
- Franklin School of Innovation parking lot: 61 Innovation Dr
- Buncombe County Health Department: 40 Coxe Ave
- Asheville Shelter at AB Tech, Ferguson Building: 340 Victoria Rd

Library Wi-Fi password: "readmore" (one word, lowercase)

Spectrum:

All bills are automatically credited for any time customers do not receive service.

CLEANUP, REPAIR, & REBUILDING

ASSISTANCE

Residents needing assistance cleaning up damage from Hurricane Helene can call 844.965.1386 to ask for help. Crisis Clean-Up will connect you with volunteers from local relief organizations, community groups, and faith communities who may be able to assist. The hotline is open through Friday, November 1.

Blue Ridge Women in Agriculture is providing volunteer maintenance and cleanup to recover and rebuild farms. Click [here](#) to make an assistance request.

CLEANUP PROTOCOL

It is crucial to prioritize safety during cleanup efforts. Here are some key protocols to keep in mind:

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- **Protect yourself from Mold:** Flooded areas can develop mold quickly. Wear an N95 mask or respirator to avoid inhaling spores and wear protective gloves and goggles while cleaning. Dispose of items that cannot be dried or cleaned thoroughly.
- **Wear Appropriate Clothing:** Make sure to wear long pants, a long sleeve shirt, and puncture-resistant boots. Avoid exposure to contaminated debris and sharp objects.
- **Use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):** Always use protective equipment, including gloves, helmets, and eye protection. PPE helps protect you from exposure to chemicals, cuts, and other hazards during cleaning.
- **Handle Chemicals Safely:** Never mix cleaning products like chlorine and ammonia; doing so creates toxic fumes. Use the chemicals in well-ventilated areas and follow the instructions on the label for proper use.
- **Beware of Sharp Objects:** If you handle debris, consider the presence of nails, glass, or other sharp objects. Wear puncture-resistant gloves and boots for added protection.

SALVAGING AND CLEANING UP FLOOD DAMAGED PROPERTY

- Always wear protective clothing. This includes long-sleeved shirts, long pants, rubber or plastic gloves and waterproof boots or shoes.
- If the home needs a tarp to prevent further damage, install the tarp as quickly as possible.
- Take wet items outside. Your home could be contaminated with mold, which may raise the health risk for those with asthma, allergies, and breathing conditions.
- Clean all hard surfaces and items with bleach. If possible, wash wet fabrics in hot water.
- Use caution when entering your home. Before entering your residence, look around the outside for damaged power lines, gas lines and other structural damage. If able, open doors and windows so your house can air out before spending any length of time inside.
- Watch for sharp objects such as protruding nails and screws, aluminum, and broken glass.
- Turn off main electrical power and water systems. Don't use gas appliances until a professional can inspect them.

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- Check all ceilings and floors for signs of sagging or other potentially dangerous structural damage. Remove all drywall and insulation that has been in contact with flood waters.
- Throw out any items that cannot be cleaned. This includes items like mattresses, carpeting and stuffed animals that absorb water and cannot be cleaned or disinfected.

CLEANING MOLD

Before:

- Protect yourself and loved ones against hazards. People with breathing problems like asthma or who have weakened immune systems should stay away from moldy sites. Children should not take part in disaster cleanup work. Check for loose power lines or gas leaks. Make sure the electricity and gas are turned off. Look for sagging ceilings or floors or other structural problems. Watch out for wet, muddy, or slippery floors.
- Protect your mouth and nose against breathing mold: wear at least an N-95 respirator. If you plan to spend a lot of time removing moldy belongings or doing work like ripping out moldy drywall, wear a half-face or full-face respirator. Basic information on using it is in OSHA's general respiratory protection guidance.
- Protect your skin. Wear protective gloves (non-latex, vinyl, nitrile, or rubber). Do not touch mold or moldy items with bare hands.
- Protect your eyes. Wear goggles that provide complete eye protection. Choose goggles designed to keep out dust and small particles. Safety glasses or goggles that have open vent holes will not protect you against dust and small particles.

Cleaning:

- Put on personal protective equipment (an N-95 respirator at a minimum, goggles, and protective gloves) to protect your eyes, nose, mouth, and skin.
- Remove standing water and wet materials. Use a wet vacuum to remove water from floors, carpets, and hard surfaces. Dry your home and everything in it as quickly as you can – within 24 to 48 hours if you can.
- Open all doors and windows when you are working and leave as many open as is safe when you leave. Open inside doors, especially closets and interior rooms, to let air flow to all areas. Take doors off their hinges if you need to. Open kitchen

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cabinets and bathroom vanity doors; remove drawers, wipe them clean, and stack them to dry. Open the attic access to let air flow to the attic. Before you open the attic door, make sure nothing will fall on you.

- When electricity is safe to use, use fans and dehumidifiers to remove moisture. Do not use fans if mold has already started to grow, because the fans may spread the mold.
- Clean with water and a detergent. Remove all mold you can see. Dry right away.
- If you use cleaning products, do not mix cleaning products together. DO NOT mix bleach and ammonia because it can create toxic vapors.
- Painting or caulking over mold will not prevent mold from growing. Fix the water problem completely and clean up all the mold before you paint or caulk.
- Throw away items that can't be cleaned and dried. Throw away anything that was wet with flood water and can't be cleaned and dried completely within 24 to 48 hours. If you have precious items that you want to preserve, follow these [guidelines from the Smithsonian Institute](#).

After:

- Shower and change your clothes to avoid carrying mold and other hazards back to your current living quarters.

PERMITS

City of Asheville Helene Emergency Permits are available at develop.ashevillenc.gov. Permits are intended to allow immediate removal of storm damage related items and reconstruction to pre-storm conditions. Permit fees are currently waived and issued within 24 hours.

Assessments of structures that received storm-related damage are in progress and will continue for the next couple of weeks. Building Damage Assessment Teams will be traveling in pairs, and within City of Asheville marked vehicles. Assessments include the posting of buildings tags:

- Green indicates there was storm-related damage to a building and occupancy can be immediately re-established.
- Yellow indicates that there are damaged areas of the building that should be avoided but the building is occupiable within the safe parts of the building.

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- Red indicates that the building is unsafe to occupy. (Red does not indicate a notice of condemnation or demolition)

If your building did not receive storm-related damage, you won't receive a tag or documentation and may operate your business as usual.

Buncombe County Permits and Inspections employees have been carrying out inspections and assessments of damaged properties and are now using a color-coded placard system to alert residents of building conditions.

- Yellow: Restricted Use
- Red/Pink: Unsafe

All storm damage permits are currently free of charge to ensure the use of licensed contractors.

All repairs costing \$40k or more must be carried out by North Carolina licensed contractors.

For information on permits, contact 828.250.5360 or visit buncombecounty.org/permits.

If your property is within the Special Flood Hazard Area, additional permitting may be necessary. Contact the Flood Plain Administration for confirmation by calling 828.250.4830.

HIRING TREE COMPANIES AND CONTRACTORS

Important Notice for Asheville Homeowners: Protect Yourself When Hiring Tree Companies and Contractors Post-Hurricane

In the aftermath of the recent hurricane, we understand that many Asheville residents are eager to begin recovery efforts, particularly when it comes to removing damaged trees and repairing property. However, we urge homeowners to take caution when hiring tree companies and contractors. Unfortunately, disasters like this can attract unlicensed or unethical contractors who may try to take advantage of homeowners in distress.

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To ensure you make informed decisions and protect yourself from scams or unfinished work, please follow these important guidelines:

- Check for Proper Licensing and Insurance
 - Always ask for proof of a contractor's license and liability insurance. This protects you in case of accidents or damage to your property during the work.
 - Verify the contractor's credentials with local or state agencies to ensure they are in good standing.
- Get References and Read Reviews
 - Request references from previous customers. A reputable contractor will gladly provide this information.
 - Research online reviews or ask neighbors for recommendations to ensure the company has a history of completing work to satisfaction.
- Avoid Upfront Payments
 - Be cautious of contractors who demand large upfront payments; never pay more than half.
 - Reputable companies will provide an estimate and schedule payments based on progress.
 - Always get a written contract that outlines the scope of work, the timeline, and a payment schedule.
- Obtain Multiple Estimates
 - Compare at least three estimates to ensure the price is fair and competitive. Avoid the temptation to rush into the first offer, even under pressure.
 - Be wary of unusually low estimates, which could be a sign of poor-quality work or potential scams.
- Verify the Completion of Work
 - Inspect the work before making final payments to ensure it is completed to your satisfaction. If possible, consult an expert or trusted advisor for a second opinion.
- Trust Your Instincts
 - High-pressure tactics, aggressive sales pitches, or offers that sound too good to be true are red flags. Take your time to make a sound decision despite the stress of the situation.

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Remember, the stress and urgency after a disaster can cloud judgment, but taking these steps will help protect your property and your finances. If you have any doubts or need assistance, please reach out to local authorities or trusted professionals for guidance.

COMMUNITY CARE STATIONS

Community Care Stations provide space for the public to shower, do laundry, use the bathroom, access cell towers and Wi-Fi, get potable/non-potable water, and access counseling services. Residents are asked to bring towels, shower shoes, and toiletries to Community Care Stations if possible; otherwise, items will be provided.

With ADA accessible showers and restrooms:

- AC Reynolds High School, 1 Rocket Dr.
- Ingles, 225 Charlotte Hwy.
- At Home Store (Parking Lot), 980 Brevard Rd.
- Buncombe County Sports Park, 58 Apac Dr.
- Bethel United Methodist, 1050 Riceville Rd.
- Owen Pool Comfort Station, 117 Stone Dr.
- Morgan Hill Baptist Church, 594 Barnardsville Hwy.

Without ADA accessible showers and restrooms:

- Swanannoa Ingles, 2319 US Hwy 70.
- Big Lots/Innsbruck Mall, 85 Tunnel Rd.

In addition, the below mobile site will also provide in-person support from Monday, October 28 to Thursday, October 31.

- Buncombe County Sports Park (Parking Lot), 58 Apac Dr.

COURTS

All Buncombe County Courthouse jurors are excused through the end of the month.

Many District and Superior Courts cases will be continued. Priority will be given to in-custody cases and first appearances.

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Criminal case information can be found out by calling the District Attorney's Office on either 828-259-3410 or 828-259-3400.

All Civil Superior cases are being continued on Civil Superior cases. Trials will resume on November 1. Hearings on motions will be conducted via WebEx until further notice unless in-person arrangements are made with the trial coordinator. If you have limited or no access to internet, a space will be available at the courthouse. For more information, call 828-259-3410.

CURFEWS

The curfew has been lifted within Asheville city limits.

DONATIONS

Donation Centers have closed, as goods are no longer being received. It is asked that the community consider financial donations to United Way, the Western Northern Carolina Disaster Response Fund, or area organizations.

EMERGENCY SHELTERS

OPEN SHELTERS

- Medical emergency shelter at AB Tech: 10 Genevieve Circle, Asheville, NC 28801
- Former Gold's Gym: 1815 Hendersonville Road, Asheville (no pets allowed, has playroom for children)
- First Baptist Church Swannanoa: 503 Park Street, Swannanoa
- WNC Ag Center: 1301 Fanning Bridge Rd., Fletcher (pet friendly)

For additional shelters throughout WNC, visit: <https://www.readync.gov/stay-informed/open-shelters>

EVENTS

Many programs and events were canceled or postponed during the initial emergency response to Hurricane Helene. To celebrate a return to these community-centered

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gatherings, we'll now be including some confirmed City of Asheville and Buncombe County events for community members. Each Friday, we'll post a week's worth of upcoming events. All events are free and do not require registration.

October 29:

- **Community Reflection and Remembrance Program:** 6 PM at Black Mountain Town Square on East State St. (Join community leaders and residents for readings, music, and a candlelight vigil).

October 30:

- **Movies in the Park:** 6 PM – 9 PM at Pack Square Park at 80 Court Plaza (A spooky twist on the long-running Movies in the Park summer series. Dress in costumes and enjoy “Insidious”, a fun and frightening horror film that takes place in a haunted house. Rated PG-13 for frightening images, brief strong language, terror, thematic material, and violence.

October 31:

- **Halloween Zumba Gold:** 12 PM – 1 PM at Stephens-Lee Community Center on 30 George Washington Carver Ave. (Get moving in costume in the parking lot.)
- **Booville Community Halloween Party:** 5 PM – 8 PM at Dr. Wesley Grant Sr. Southside Community Center (Southside families are invited to dress as their favorite characters to trick-or-treat and dig into candy stations as the parking lot becomes a vibrant catwalk of zombies, superheroes, vampires, and more with themed stations and live DJ performances.)
- **Shiloh Trunk or Treat:** 6 PM – 8 PM at Linwood Crump Shiloh Community Center on 121 Shiloh Rd. (Join neighborhood families as costumed kids go from station to station to collect candy and other treats.)
- **Montford Haunted Tent:** 6 PM – 8 PM at Tempie Avery Montford Community Center on 34 Pearson Dr. (It's mostly delicious treats (and some special tricks) for Montford families under the haunted big top!)

November 1:

- **Día de Muertos Loteria:** 4 PM – 6 PM at Burton Street Community Center on 134 Burton St. (Celebrate the traditional Mexican holiday by learning Spanish vocabulary and symbols of Día de Muertos, from La Catrina to pozole.)

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FEDERAL NUTRITION PROGRAMS

The U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service has approved flexibilities due to the impacts of Hurricane Helene.

SNAP

North Carolina was granted a waiver for the 10-day reporting requirement for the replacement of food purchased with SNAP benefits lost because of the hurricane. This waiver provides additional time beyond the standard 10-day period for households to report food losses and receive replacement benefits for food that was destroyed and previously purchased with SNAP benefits.

Child Nutrition

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction was approved for a waiver pertaining to the child nutrition programs. Under the waiver approval, NCDPI's local program operators may:

- Serve meals in a non-congregate setting
- Adjust the time of meal service
- Allow parent pick-up
- Allow service of meals at school sites

Food and Nutrition Services Program

People and families in North Carolina who are enrolled in the Food and Nutrition Services program can now use their EBT card to purchase hot food. This flexibility will remain in effect until November 3.

Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, & Children (WIC)

Families participating in WIC who may have relocated to a new area can go to any NC WIC agency to:

- Have a new eWIC card issued
- Request replacement breastfeeding supplies or breast pumps
- Request replacement food that was purchased with current WIC benefits and lost due to Hurricane Helene

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FOOD AND WATER DISTRIBUTION

City/County sponsored sites:

Food, bottled drinking water, and bulk water for flushing (note that bulk water is not available at Linwood Crump Shiloh Community Center). Please bring your own containers.

- Pack Square Park, 70 Court Plaza, 9 AM – 7 PM
- Linwood Crump Shiloh Community Center, 121 Shiloh Rd., 9 AM – 7 PM
- Sky Lanes Bowling Alley, 1477 Patton Ave., 9 AM – 7 PM
- Fairview Ingles, 225 Charlotte Hwy. 12 PM – 4 PM
- Buncombe County Sports Park Complex, 58 Apac Dr., 7 AM – 7 PM
- Black Mountain Ingles, 550 NC-9, 12 PM – 4 PM
- Swannanoa Ingles, 2299 US 70, 7 AM – 7 PM
- At Home Store, 980 Brevard Rd., 9 AM – 7 PM
- Innsbruck Shopping Center, 85 Tunnel Rd., 9 AM – 7 PM

For water delivery if unable to reach distribution sites, call 828-250-6100.

Private distribution sites may also be available in the community.

GRANTS AND OTHER FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Before applying for the below assistance programs, particularly when it comes to federal programs: 1) Document damages (photos, videos, extensive notes, and 3rd party witnesses/verification are best) before cleaning up; and for agriculture/farming grants 2) Contact the local USDA Service Center for guidance on program availability and eligibility. Additional resource information can be found [here](#).

LOCAL

- [Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project Immediate Needs Grant](#)
- [Rural Advancement Foundation](#) Also offers a crisis hotline, 866.586.6746
- FarmAid: 1.800.FARMAID
- [ASAP Connections](#)

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- [WNC Community Immediate Disaster Needs Program](#)

AGRICULTURAL

- [Livestock Assistance](#)
- [Livestock Indemnity Program](#)
- [Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees, and Farm-raised Fish](#)
- [Emergency Conservation Program](#)
- [Tree Assistance Program](#)
- [Emergency Forest Restoration](#)
- [Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance](#)
- [Emergency Farm Loans](#)
- [Center for Environmental Farming Sysytems](#)

ARTISTS

- [Craft Emergency Relief Fund](#)
- [Rauschenberg Medical Emergencies](#)
- [Rauschenberg Dancer Emergencies](#)
- [Adolph & Esther Gottlieb Foundation](#)
- [Artists Fellowship](#)
- [Asheville Fringe Artists Relief Fund](#)
- [Authors League Fund](#)
- [American Society of Journalists and Authors](#)
- [Musicians Foundation](#)
- [Sweet Relief Musicians Fund](#)
- [Arts AVL Emergency Relief Grant](#)
- [Creative Relief](#)
- [Mountain Area Cultural Resources Emergency Network](#)
- [NC Arts Disaster Relief Fund](#)
- [MusiCares Relief](#)

COMMUNITY-WIDE

- [Community Foundation of Western North Carolina Emergency Grant](#)
- [Eblen Charities](#)

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FOOD AND BEVERAGE/HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

- [Giving Kitchen](#)
- [The NC Hospitality Workers Relief Fund](#)
- [Southern Smoke Foundation](#)
- [United Sommeliers Foundation](#)
- [Restaurant Disaster Relief Fund](#)
- [NC Hospitality Workers Relief Fund](#)

NON-PROFITS

- [Dogwood Health Trust](#)

SMALL BUSINESS

- [Global Empowerment Mission](#)

HEALTH AND MEDICAL SERVICES

URGENT CARE: MERCY URGENT CARE (8:30 AM - 6:00 PM)

- West Asheville: 1201 Patton Ave
- Weaverville: 61 Weaver Blvd
- Brevard: 22 Trust Lane
- Waynesville: 120 Frazier St
- Foothills: 140 W Mills St

NOVANT GO-HEALTH URGENT CARE

- 349 New Leicester Highway, 9 AM - 6 PM

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VA HOSPITAL

- 1100 Tunnel Road:
 - Operating 24/7 for emergencies and inpatient services; Limited emergency surgeries available; Routine appointments canceled; Acute needs scheduled

Veterans needing medication: Visit VA pharmacy or call 855.679.0074 and press 1. Any retail pharmacy in the community will provide Veterans with a written prescription or active VA prescription bottle as long as they are not older than 6 months and can receive 30-day supplies.

PHARMACIES

- View open pharmacies:
<https://www.ncbop.org/emergencyoperatingpharmacieshelene.html>
- Pharmacists can dispense one-time emergency supply (up to 90 days) when unable to contact medical provider
- One-time emergency refill (up to 30 days) of prescribed medication available

DIALYSIS

Mountain Mobility is offering life-sustaining dialysis and chemotherapy transport and assistance for accessible patients in coordination with dialysis and cancer centers. They are also resuming all non-emergency trips.

OXYGEN REFILLING STATIONS

- Palmetto Oxygen LLC: 828-285-0235
- Blue Ridge: 828-232-1110
- AeroFlow: 888-345-1780
- Lincare: 828-255-4545
- Accucare: 828-236-3100
- Bradshaw Oxygen LLC: 888-380-6297
- East Coast Medical Oxygen: 828-252-7770

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CAROLINA ABORTION FUND (CAF)

- Prioritizing callers from WNC
- May be able to help secure funding to get care elsewhere
- Working on distributing Plan B to WNC
- For funding assistance: <https://www.carolinaabortionfund.org/funding>

PLANNED PARENTHOOD

For reproductive and sexual health care needs, call 1-800-230-PLAN. Current patients can get medication refills by calling 828.252.7928, or accessing Epic (Electronic Health Records) and sending a note through patient portal

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

The Health Department is waiving all vaccine fees at this time.

FREE MEDICAL SERVICES

Buncombe County HHS:

Offering free Tdap, COVID, flu, and Hepatitis A vaccines at the following sites:

- Swannanoa Ingles (M/W/F from 12 PM – 6 PM, and T/TH from 9 AM – 1 PM)
- Buncombe County Sports Park (W/F 9 AM – 1 PM)
- Big Lots (M/W/F from 12 PM – 6 PM)

AER Dental Studio (1215 Smokey Park Hwy., Candler) is offering free dental treatment (one extraction or one filling per patient) today, Monday, October 28, from 10 AM – 3:30 PM.

UNC HEALTH:

If you don't have internet and need a visit for someone 6 months and older who has mild symptoms, you can call 828-435-8002 or [go online to get in line](#) to speak with a UNC Health primary care provider through UNC Health Virtual Care Now.

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If you do have internet and are over 18 years of age, you can also get in line for Virtual Care Now through [My UNC Chart](#). Virtual services are available every day from 6 AM -10 PM.

Novant GoHealth:

Novant GoHealth in Merrimon Ave. is open from 9 AM – 6 PM, and Novant GoHealth in Black Mountain is open from 9 AM – 5 PM. Both locations are providing free charity care for the community.

HOUSING

MORTGAGES AND FORECLOSURES

- 90-day moratorium on FHA-insured mortgage foreclosures
- 90-day moratorium on Section 184 Indian Home Loan Guarantee program foreclosures
- 90-day automatic extension for Home Equity Conversion Mortgages
- Effective from the President's disaster declaration date

For additional information: https://www.hud.gov/states/north_carolina

Contact Asheville Housing Authority: Monique Pierre at mpierre@haca.org

RENTERS

Renters can apply for individual assistance on disasterassistance.gov. Individual assistance doesn't just cover housing repairs, but also gas, food, utility bills, hotel stays and other disaster-associated costs.

2025 PROPERTY REAPPRAISAL

A resolution has been approved to delay the 2025 Property Reappraisal until January 1, 2026. At this time, it is unknown how market values will be impacted by the severity of damage. The property assessment team is in the data and analysis phase and will be

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spending the remainder of the year ensuring properties are assessed as accurately and as equitably as possible.

SEEKING TEMPORARY RENTAL HOUSING UNITS

(FEMA) is seeking information from owners of multifamily properties that can be repaired to local, state, and federal standards and be offered as temporary housing to survivors impacted by Tropical Storm Helene. The deadline for replies to this request for information is November 6, 2024.

- The properties are to be offered as temporary housing to eligible disaster survivors.
- The properties must be available for a term of no less than 18 months, with the option of lease extension.
- The properties should be complexes that are able to accommodate a considerable number of people in a single location.
- Each property must have been previously used as a multifamily housing complex and contain multiple rental units.
- The site must be repairable to local, state, and federal regulations within a four-month period and cannot be located in a floodway.
- This is not intended to repair or improve individual units to rehouse existing tenants.

Interested property owners or management companies must provide responses and comments no later than 5 PM EST, November 6, 2024, via email to: *fema-mlr_dr4827nc@fema.dhs.gov*

The email subject line should read: *RFI#70FBR425-MLR-DR4827NC Response: MLR-DR-4827-NC*

Properties that do not need repair and are in a condition to be rented immediately are also requested. Interested property owners or management companies must provide responses and comments on or before 5 PM, EST, November 6, 2024, via email to: *fema-direct_lease_dr4827nc@fema.dhs.gov*.

The email subject line should read: *RFI# 70FBR425-DL-DR4827NC*

More information can be found at [SAM.gov](https://sam.gov).

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HYGIENE FACILITIES

COMMUNITY CARE STATIONS

Community Care Stations provide space for the public to shower, do laundry, use the bathroom, access cell towers and Wi-Fi, get potable/non-potable water, and access counseling services. Residents are asked to bring towels, shower shoes, and toiletries to Community Care Stations if possible; otherwise, items will be provided.

With ADA accessible showers and restrooms:

- AC Reynolds High School, 1 Rocket Dr.
- Ingles, 225 Charlotte Hwy.
- At Home Store (Parking Lot), 980 Brevard Rd.
- Buncombe County Sports Park, 58 Apac Dr.
- Bethel United Methodist, 1050 Riceville Rd.
- Owen Pool Comfort Station, 117 Stone Dr.
- Morgan Hill Baptist Church, 594 Barnardsville Hwy.

Without ADA accessible showers and restrooms:

- Swanannoa Ingles, 2319 US Hwy 70.
- Big Lots/Innsbruck Mall, 85 Tunnel Rd.

In addition, the below mobile site will also provide in-person support from Monday, October 28 to Thursday, October 31.

- Buncombe County Sports Park (Parking Lot), 58 Apac Dr.

PORTA-POTTIES AND HAND WASHING STATIONS

- Outside of the Orange Peel: 101 Biltmore Ave
- Pack Square Park
- Various locations around town

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LAUNDRY SERVICES

- Laundry Trailers at Basilica of Saint Lawrence: 97 Haywood St
 - Opens at 8:00 AM daily
 - Wash: 20 minutes, Dry: 30 minutes
 - Detergent provided (can bring your own)
- Walmart in Arden: 60 Airport Rd

SHOWERS

Showers can be found at all Community Care Stations (see above) as well as:

Reuter Family YMCA at 3 Town Square Blvd, Asheville

- Open to public: 10 AM - 5 PM daily
- Amenities: showers, gym, playground, power charging

IDENTIFICATION ASSISTANCE

The North Carolina Division of Motor Vehicles has designated local driver license offices in Western North Carolina as credential pick-up centers for residents impacted by Hurricane Helene. With mail services temporarily unavailable, these centers provide a solution for obtaining driver licenses and ID cards as recovery efforts continue. Buncombe County/WNC credentials have been prioritized for delivery via USPS.

If ordered before October 7, whether online or in person, and you have not received your credential by mail, it could have been returned to the NCDMV Headquarters. Please visit ncdot.gov/WNCcredentialPickup, find your zip code, and see where your credential can be picked up. If ordered after October 7, whether online or in person, and your address is in a zip code listed in the table on the webpage, you must return to that office after 21 days to pick up your credential.

If your credential cannot be located in the NCDMV system, a duplicate credential will need to be ordered. That can be done in person or online at MyNCDMV.gov.

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Emergency operations and card distribution will continue through the end of the year. To learn more, including times and locations of open offices, visit the above-referenced website.

LEGAL ASSISTANCE

LEGAL AID

Legal Aid of North Carolina stands ready to provide free advice and legal counsel regarding natural disaster needs, including legal representation if necessary, including for civil legal issues involving:

- Filing FEMA claims and appeals (a process which can be overwhelmingly bureaucratic and burdensome)
- Replacement of lost or destroyed legal and government documents, including driver's licenses and identification cards
- Medical and insurance claims
- Home repair contracts
- Utility disputes related to restoration of services
- Consumer protection issues like construction fraud, price-gouging on repairs and identity theft
- Housing issues such as unlawful eviction and foreclosures
- Bankruptcy
- Probate and clearing title for survivors living in generational homes without a clear title
- Family law cases and children in need of services (unfortunately, domestic violence tends to rise following a natural disaster)

If you need civil legal assistance, please contact Legal Aid of North Carolina via the following toll-free hotline: (866) 219-LANC or (866) 219-5262. The hotline is available from: 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., Monday through Friday; and 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. on Monday and Thursdays. Constituents can also apply online at legalaidnc.org/get-help/ between 1:00-4:30 p.m., Monday - Friday.

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PISGAH LEGAL SERVICES

Pisgah Legal Services is helping the people of our mountain region recover and rebuild from Hurricane Helene by offering assistance in applying for FEMA aid, emergency SNAP benefits, disaster unemployment, healthcare coverage, and more.

You can [reach out online](#), or call 828.253.0406 or toll-free 1.800.489.6144.

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

Vaya 24/7 line: 1-800-849-6127

RHA Health Services: 1-888-573-1006 (available 24/7/365)

National Alliance on Mental Illness North Carolina:

- Call: (919) 788-0801 or 800-451-9682
- Text: 919-999-6527
- Email: helpline@naminc.org

Suicide and Crisis Lifeline:

- Call or text 988
- Website: 988lifeline.org

Disaster Distress Helpline: (English and Spanish)

- Call or text 1-800-985-5990
- For Spanish, press "2"
- For ASL, call or text 1-800-985-5990

East Carolina University Center for Counseling and Student Development:

- For UNCA students
- (252) 328-6661 until Oct. 11

Extreme Weather Survivors:

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- Free, three-event webinar series offering support and coping strategies, "Healing After Trauma," beginning on Tuesday, October 29, at 8:00 PM. Register [here](#).

Care Collaborative for Western North Carolina Clinicians:

- List of over 150 clinicians offering free services:
<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1XP77E1QEV43vMklyS8fjZ5PnfKR-8Mx4hY50aT417Zk/edit?pli=1&gid=0#gid=0>

Agriculture and Farming Services:

- Rural Advancement Foundation Farmer Crisis Hotline: 866.586.6746
- North Carolina Farmers Hotline: 844.325.3276
- [North Carolina Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance](#)

Buncombe County resources:

- Mental health clinicians deployed for all first responders
- Hope4NC hotline for first responders: 1-855-587-3463
- Mental health counselors staffed at shelters
- All shelters have Naloxone and methadone source
- Opioid treatment programs reopened (can visit any facility)

MISSING PERSONS

Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) teams are continuing their work across Buncombe County.

To report a missing loved one, and you are in the City of Asheville limits, please contact the Asheville Police Department by calling 828.252.1110. If you are outside of the city limits, but within Buncombe Country, please call the Sheriff's department at 828.250.6650.

As always, for urgent and emergency situations, please call 911.

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NEWS AND INFORMATION SOURCES

News briefings:

Buncombe County will hold live briefing calls Mondays through Fridays at 11 AM on the Buncombe County Facebook page. Those briefings will be broadcast on Blue Ridge Public Radio 88.1 FM, and on iHeart radio stations 99.9, 104.3, 105.1, and 570 AM. Text-only versions are available for each briefing at text.bpr.org.

Please note, there will be no briefing on Friday, November 1.

Emergency Alerts:

Register to receive emergency texts directly from Buncombe County for breaking health and safety news. Text BCAlert to 99411 to sign up. If text alerts are coming through to devices in Spanish only. Please open the text message in its entirety to see the English language version preceding the Spanish language version.

Updated information:

- City information: <https://www.ashevillenc.gov/> (temporarily modified to make it easier for those with limited service to load the important information listed) The full website can be accessed by going to <https://www.ashevillenc.gov/full-home-page/>.
- County information: <https://www.buncombecounty.org>
- One Buncombe hotline: 828-250-6100 (for reporting storm damage, accessing resources, and storm-related information)
- Both Ashville City and Buncombe County offices are now open.

PARKS

Asheville City has reopened numerous parks. Officials stress that if a park is listed as closed, everyone should stay away from that location. Though some spaces look safe, there may be broken equipment, sinkholes, displaced wildlife, or other “unseen” dangers. Visit [ashevillenc.gov/parks](https://www.ashevillenc.gov/parks) for the most up-to-date list of open parks and recreation facilities.

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Water for drinking fountains has been shut off, but remnants may still remain in pipes. Do not drink water from any drinking fountains until the City of Asheville lifts all boil water advisories and notices.

Asheville City tennis courts will be open as of Wednesday, October 30. Fees are waived until internet service has been restored.

The dog park, community garden, and playground are now open at Buncombe County Sports Park. All other areas of the park are still unavailable for public use.

All special events are on hold.

PETS/ANIMALS/LIVESTOCK

VETERINARY SERVICES

- Veterinary Emergency Group: 1856 Hendersonville Rd Suite F, Asheville (open 24/7)
- MedVet Asheville: 677 Brevard Road, Asheville (open daily 7 AM - 7 PM)

WNC REGIONAL LIVESTOCK CENTER

- Address: 474 Stock Dr., Canton
- Donated supplies: hay, grain, etc.
- For assistance, text (don't call) 828-216-4496
- Can help with supply delivery and animal evacuation

If anyone has lost a pet, the below social media pages may be able to assist in reunification:

- Buncombe County Pets Lost and Found
- Hurricane Helene Lost and Found Pets
- WNC's Lost and Found Pets
- Asheville Dog Weirdos

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PET FOOD, SUPPLIES, & SERVICES

The Asheville Humane Society is distributing free pet food at the WNC Farmers Market (570 Brevard Rd.) and River Ridge Shopping Center (800 Fairview Rd., Suite C3).

ASPCA Hurricane Relief Hotline: 888.808.0810 (7 AM – 7 PM, 7 days/week). Services offered include pet/food supplies and animal search and rescue. Residents can also find out information on animal shelters, veterinarian clinics, volunteer opportunities, and how to donate. <https://www.asPCA.org/about-us/press-releases/aspca-launches-animal-assistance-hotline-provides-free-pet-food-and-supplies>

POWER RESTORATION

DUKE ENERGY

Duke Energy has provided an interactive outage map that can be accessed at <https://www.duke-energy.com/info/carolinas-restoration> and entering specific location details. **If power is out but an outage is not represented on the outage map, please text OUT to 57801 or via the Duke Energy app. Residents may notice neighbors with power. This is referred to as a "nesting outage." If your neighbors have power and you don't, please report that using the text system above.**

GENERATOR SAFETY TIPS

If you use a portable generator for electricity, use CAUTION to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning and fires.

- Use portable generators outside and at least 20 feet away from buildings.
- Do not use portable generators inside your house or garage.
- Do not put portable generators on balconies or near doors, vents, or windows.
- Do not use portable generators near where you or your children are sleeping.
- Never refuel a generator while it is hot.

For more information, click [here](#).

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PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

ART (Asheville Redefines Transit):

ART bus services have resumed their regular schedules.

- 5:30 AM – 11 PM Mondays – Saturdays
- 8 AM – 6 PM on Sundays and holidays

The N20, 170, and WE1 eastbound routes have been modified. You can find more information on those, and all routes [here](#). You can also register to receive transit alerts by texting NextART to 41411

ART Bus services will remain free until further notice.

Flag stops are no longer available. Please use designated stops along the route to board the bus.

ART Paratransit services are resuming where possible. Paratransit customers should call 828.250.6750 to schedule transportation.

Shuttle service is also available from 8 AM to 4 PM to AC Reynolds from area shelters. One bus will provide transportation to these shelters and the resource center.

ROAD CLOSURES AND TRAVEL

For current road conditions and closures: <https://drivenc.gov/>

RUMOR CONTROL/SCAMS

Homeowners and renters in North Carolina who applied for FEMA disaster assistance should be aware that FEMA representatives may call from unfamiliar area codes and phone numbers or show SPAM or no caller ID. It is important to answer the call, but always be alert. FEMA inspectors will never call if you did not submit a FEMA application, and a FEMA inspector will never ask for banking information or make a request for payment.

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A scam is circulating regarding federal warrants. Texts or emails are being sent with falsified court and/or arrest reports that contain the names of actual Carolina law enforcement officers. People are then asked to pay a fine for missing jury duty. At no time will arrest or court reports be texted or emailed, as they are only delivered in person. At no time will requests for payment be made via text or email. If you have received one of these messages, please report it to your local law enforcement agency.

FEMA is working to stop the spread of misinformation. For official information and to report potential scams, visit: [Hurricane Helene: Rumor Response | FEMA.gov](#)

A list of trusted area sources can be found [here](#).

SCHOOLS

Ashville City Schools and Buncombe County Schools have resumed in-class learning. There is a two-hour delay to school start time in Buncombe County Schools, which will continue until Monday, November 4.

University of North Carolina (UNC) Asheville updates can be found at [new.unca.edu](#).

Asheville–Buncombe Technical Community College has reopened

Notes:

The after-school program run by the Asheville City Parks and Recreation Department will return from 3 PM - 6 PM on Monday, October 28. This program is for students previously enrolled. For more information visit [ashevillenc.gov/parks](#).

SEWERAGE & WATER SYSTEMS

SEWERAGE SYSTEM

Buncombe County's sewer system remains operational, but please check the lines on your own property for any damage before using.

The Metropolitan Sewerage District administration building is now open to the public, at 2028 Riverside Dr. in Asheville. You can visit in person, but if you have a sewer

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emergency you can also call 828-768-0540. Crews are working around the clock to secure the system, but the treatment plant was unaffected except for a temporary loss of power. All 40 pump stations are back online with some running on generator power. Main "interceptor" lines are working. Crews are assessing the other 1,100 miles of smaller lines.

WATER SYSTEM REPAIRS

All dams in the area were examined and inspected on Thursday, October 24, and it has been noted all are safe with no imminent threat of failing.

Turbidity curtain installation began on Monday, October 28.

Water Advisory:

Out of an abundance of caution, the unlabeled half-gallon bottles of water from the Tunnel Road and Charlotte Highway distribution sites featuring green lids should be used as non-potable or gray water only. While the water has not been found to be unsafe, there have been reports of discoloration, so water from those bottles should not be consumed. Buncombe County will work with the manufacturer and the appropriate monitoring authorities to ensure the water meets the highest levels of safety. In the meantime, this water should not be consumed. This advisory only applies to the unmarked half-gallon bottles with green lids distributed from the Tunnel Road and Charlotte Highway sites.

WHAT TO DO BEFORE WATER SERVICE RETURNS

- Flip off the breaker to your water heater.
- Turn off water to your water heater.
- Turn off hot water under your sinks.
- Remove aerator (it unscrews) on faucet.
- Turn off the ice maker.
- Turn off water to your whole house filter if you have one.
- Flush your water pipes periodically using the bathtub faucet when water returns.
- Turn off water to toilets when not in use. Turn on water only to flush

The City has made a video with detailed steps that you can view on YouTube by clicking [HERE](#).

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FLUSHING PLUMBING WHEN WATER SERVICE RETURNS

- Flush your home plumbing by running the bathtub's cold water faucet.
- Your water heater may be turned back on once your home's plumbing has been flushed.
- It's safe to flush your toilet after completing steps 1 and 2.

FOR THOSE WITH WATER SERVICE

A Boil Water Notice is in effect for customers with running tap water. Residents will receive daily boil water text notifications that are legally required by the Environmental Protection Agency.

- This water contains sediment but is highly chlorinated to provide as much disinfection as possible.
- Boil water vigorously for at least one minute, even if filtered
- If boiling is not possible, add 8 drops of bleach per 1 gallon of water
- Use bottled water for drinking, cooking, and brushing your teeth
- Use bottled water for infant formula and pets
- Do not use ice made from un-boiled water
- For hand washing, use boiled or bottled water (use hand sanitizer if neither available)
- Do not use water from connected appliances (e.g., refrigerator water dispensers)
- Turn off ice makers
- Close the valve to the hot water heater to prevent sediment from accumulating, and open the inlet once water is restored
- Pour discolored water through your bathtub

POTABLE VS NONPOTABLE WATER

Potable water is safe for drinking and non-potable is not.

Potable Water: This is water that is safe to drink and use for food preparation. It meets safety and health standards, typically set by governments or regulatory bodies, and is free from harmful contaminants such as bacteria, viruses, chemicals, and toxins.

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Non-Potable Water: This water is not safe for drinking or food preparation due to the presence of contaminants, pollutants, or chemicals. It may be used for purposes such as irrigation, industrial processes, flushing toilets, washing dishes at 170 degrees, laundry or cleaning, but should never be consumed without proper treatment.

FLUSHING

Water for flushing (non-potable) is available at most water distribution sites (*see the 'Food, Water, Supplies Distribution' section in the Table of Contents*). The Jewish Community Center's Pool (40 Clyde Street) is also a source of water for flushing from 10 AM - 12 PM. Bring containers.

FlushAVL is looking for flush brigade volunteers. Click [here](#) to register and find out more.

FAQs

For frequently asked questions regarding water outages, what to do when water returns, etc., click [here](#).

WELL WATER TESTING

For flooded wells:

- Disinfect the well and have water tested before use
- Boil water for at least one minute if using before testing
- Call 828-250-5016 to have your water tested and for information on how to test your well
- [Tips](#)

Free well testing kits providing a sample container, and information on how to disinfect your well and collect an effective sample can be picked up at the Permits and Inspections Department at the Buncombe County Health Department, 30 Valley St., Monday – Friday from 8 AM – 4 PM. There is a two-day turnaround time for results.

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It is important to note that all wells being drilled on properties MUST have a permit. People cannot drill wells without those permits in place. Permits can also be applied for at the Buncombe County Health Department, 30 Valley St.

Please note that when accessing the Buncombe County Health Department building, Valley St. is currently blocked off due to the stationing of potable water tanks. Drivers are asked to use the Charlotte St. entrance and utilize one of the public parking lot spaces. If the parking lot is full, please be patient until a spot becomes available, as many residents are picking up water testing kits, and the parking lot is also being used for volunteers and employees.

TESTING

To ensure the safety of customers, Water Resources, with guidance from the EPA and North Carolina DEQ, developed and implemented a [water sampling plan](#) specific to recovering from Helene. Most sample stations are taps going right into the water lines. There are 184 sampling stations throughout the distribution system. Under normal conditions, 8-10 stations per day are tested. However, since Helene, there are 35 stations per day on average. Water Resources' in-house testing is slightly more accurate when the water is clear. As a result, samples are sent to a third-party lab, and the results have a turnaround time of 7-10 days.

Daily testing is done for chlorine, e coli, coliform bacteria, aluminum, iron, and manganese. No testing results have gone over the EPA-regulated number for Secondary Maximum Contaminant Levels.

More information regarding water quality testing post-Helene can be found on the [City's Water Recovery webpage](#).

BILLING/PAYMENTS

The City of Asheville is not assessing late fees for water bills, sending delinquent notices, creating new bills, or doing any cuts-offs for non-payment at this time.

Payments are being accepted online, IVR, and by mail for anyone that is trying to pay an existing bill.

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Customers can call 828-251-1122 with billing concerns.

SMALL BUSINESS RESOURCES

BUNCOMBE COUNTY

In an effort to get food services establishments up and running safely and quickly, the Buncombe County Environmental Health Department has launched a new Emergency Operations Plan for Food Establishments form. It can be obtained, completed, and submitted at buncombecounty.org/eh.

MOUNTAIN BizWORKS

- [Business Recovery Resources](#)
- [WNC Recovery Loans](#)

U.S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (SBA) DISASTER ASSISTANCE

- Loans available for homeowners, renters, businesses, and nonprofits affected by the disaster
- Types of loans:
 1. Home Disaster Loans
 2. Business Physical Disaster Loans
 3. Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDL)
- Apply online: SBA.gov/disaster
- For more information: Call SBA's Customer Service Center at 800-659-2955

SBA office location:

- Asheville Chamber of Commerce: 36 Montford Avenue
- Hours: Monday-Friday 9 AM - 6 PM, Saturday 9 AM - 3 PM, closed on Sundays

ASHEVILLE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Restaurants impacted by Hurricane Helene can apply to operate under Emergency Operations Plans. Read the [press release](#) and view the [newly-released guide](#) from NCDHHS. Email info@ncrla.org with any questions.

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Businesses impacted by Helene are invited to access free resources and recovery workspace at our Business Recovery Center, 36 Montford Ave.) Open to ALL area businesses. Wi-Fi and portable toilets available.

Partners on-site provide one-on-one support for businesses of all sizes.

- U.S. Small Business Administration: in-person assistance for SBA disaster loan applications
- Mountain BizWorks: Providing info on recovery funds
- SBTDC: Technical support for business recovery planning
- Western Women's Business Center: Business support
- Kudzu Brands: Assisting with marketing and communication needs
- Colton Groome Financial - Assisting with disaster-related retirement plan questions

Schedules vary by partner. Click [here](#) for details.

Business Recovery Workspace:

First-come, first-served temporary workspace available at no cost for business owners, nonprofit organizations, and employees displaced due to Helene. Internet access is provided. Bring your own laptop.

Open until December 30, Monday -Friday, 9 AM to 5 PM - space for up to 70 users.

Those wishing to work from the Business Recovery Workspace will be asked to complete intake paperwork, sign in and out each day, and follow "house rules" for maintaining a comfortable, clean, and respectful environment for all users.

More details and intake paperwork are available [here](#).

[Always Asheville Recovery Funds](#)

[Resource List](#)

NC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The NC Chamber hosted a webinar: SBA Resources for All Businesses Impacted by Helene. Access the [recording](#) and/or the [slides](#).

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EXPLORE ASHEVILLE

Explore Asheville is partnering with community organizations to launch [Love Asheville From Afar](#), an initiative that connects the global community with Asheville area and Buncombe County small businesses and creatives to support regional economic recovery. This website allows users to shop from stores with online retail options, buy gift cards for future use, and directly donate to businesses, artists, and nonprofit organizations. Businesses located in or selling from Buncombe County can participate by completing this submission form.

NC DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

A hotline is now active to connect farmers with resources to assist with damage and other agriculture emergencies. Call 866.645.9403 between 8 AM and 5 PM to speak with a live operator,

TAX RELIEF

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) has announced tax relief for certain taxpayers affected by Hurricane Helene. The federal tax relief gives affected taxpayers until May 1, 2025, to file various federal individual and business tax returns and make tax payments.

Affected taxpayers include:

- Individuals who live in North Carolina
- Businesses (including tax-exempt organizations) whose principal place of business is in North Carolina
- Other individuals and businesses whose records are necessary to meet a State tax deadline are located in North Carolina
- Relief workers who are assisting in North Carolina and are affiliated with a recognized government or philanthropic organization
- Any individual visiting North Carolina who was killed or injured as a result of the disaster.

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For additional information visit <https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/irs-announces-tax-relief-for-victims-of-hurricane-helene-in-north-carolina-various-deadlines-postponed-to-may-1-2025>

Click [here](#) for information on IRS extensions.

Click [here](#) for information from the IRS on disaster assistance.

TRASH, RECYCLING, AND DEBRIS REMOVAL

HOUSEHOLD TRASH AND RECYCLING

City of Asheville:

The City has resumed collection of household trash & recycling on a regular schedule. Trash should be placed in the trash container and recycling should be placed in recycling containers. Do not put storm debris in trash bins. Materials not collected: mud, construction debris, concrete, other bulky or hazardous items.

County:

Wastepro has returned to a regular trash pickup schedule when able.

Existing Waste Pro customers are asked to sign up for service with FCC Environmental to continue household trash and recycling pickup after January 1. Click [here](#) for more information.

Recycling:

Curbside Management is accepting recycling drop-offs at 116 N. Woodfin Avenue from 8 AM - 4 PM, Monday - Friday.

For notifications about trash and recycling pickup:

- Download the AVL Collects app (available on Google Play Store and Apple App Store)

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BURNING REGULATIONS

Under no circumstances is open burning allowed within Asheville City Limits.

As our region dries out, fire chiefs and the Buncombe County Air Quality Agency have asked community members not to burn outside of city limits without obtaining permission from the county. Please call the Buncombe County Air Quality Agency at 828.250.6777, or email airquality@buncombecounty.org for more information.

Once permission is granted, please adhere to the below:

LANDFILL

Buncombe County Landfill, 85 Panther Branch Road, Alexander, open from 8 AM – 3 PM.

TRANSFER STATION

Harmony Rd. has reopened.

Please note the transfer station will not accept commercial vehicles, and access roads may be impacted by dirt and silt.

DEBRIS REMOVAL

Contractors will be in Barnardsville, Fairview, Swannanoa, Riceville, Garren Creek, East Buncombe, and North Buncombe picking up curbside storm debris until Friday, November 1.

Before placing storm debris near the curb, residents are asked to sort those materials into the following categories:

- Construction, demolition & bulky items
- Appliances
- Electronics
- Vegetative Debris
- Household Hazardous Waste

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Please do not block the roadway with debris or place debris on utilities or meters. Residents do not have to place all storm debris out at once. Contractors will be making routine collections.

Seasonal leaf collection has begun today, October 28. The community is asked to consider waiting as long as possible to set out leaves for collection, or alternatively to backyard compost. This will help make the storm debris removal process more efficient. Leaves will be collected on a bi-weekly schedule. When it is time to place leaves out for collection, remember to use either paper bags (no plastic) or containers marked as 'yard waste'. Please do not place storm debris in yard waste containers. City crews are not collecting any limbs or yard waste piles at this time. For more information on how to prepare leaves for collection, click [here](#).

UNEMPLOYMENT RESOURCES

ELIGIBILITY

- People in Buncombe County unemployed as a direct result of Hurricane Helene
- Business owners and self-employed individuals affected by the storm

APPLICATION PROCESS

- 60 days from October 1 to file an application
- Apply online at des.nc.gov
- Deadline: December 2, 2024
- If unable to file online, call DUA Hotline: 919-629-3857

DOCUMENTATION

- All required documentation must be submitted within 21 days of application
- DES will work with those who cannot provide all documentation to avoid benefit delays

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DISASTER UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Weekly unemployment benefits for workers who live or work in storm-affected areas will increase from a maximum of \$350 per week to \$600 per week up to a maximum of 26 weeks. Call 919.629.3857 (English) or 919.275.5698 (Spanish) for more information.

UNEMPLOYMENT FOR GIG/SELF-EMPLOYED WORKERS

Some workers (i.e. gig workers, self-employed workers, etc.) are being denied regular unemployment benefits, as their pay does not come from a covered employer who pays the unemployment insurance taxes necessary to fund the benefits. However, that denial is the first step in the process of receiving Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA). Workers are more likely to be eligible for DUA, and they can begin receiving that assistance only after they've either exhausted or been determined ineligible for state unemployment benefits. Any denial comes with appeal instructions. If these workers are filing due to the declared disaster and indicate it when selecting the reason for unemployment, then they are automatically sent to complete an application for DUA. Resources for workers on this issue can be found below:

[Unemployment Insurance FAQs](#)

[Disaster Unemployment Assistance FAQs](#)

MOUNTAIN AREA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

NCWorks Career Center Services are currently available at 339 New Leicester Highway, Suite 140, Asheville, inside the offices of the Land of Sky Regional Council. The NCWorks Mobile Unit will also be on site for the time being. Customers can also access NCWorks services by calling 1-855-NCWorks (1-855-629-6757). For individuals needing assistance with filing an Unemployment Claim or Disaster Related Unemployment Assistance claim 1-888-737-0259. For employers needing assistance related to Disaster Unemployment Assistance, the DES Employer Call Center can be reached at 1-866-278-3822.

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UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE (USPS) AND MAIL SERVICES RECOVERY UPDATE

USPS anticipates continued improvement of mail delivery operations with local recovery efforts, to include power, connectivity, and roads.

Social Security checks are being routed to all units for delivery and/or are available for customer pick up.

For impacted residents who have relocated due to the storm, please be sure to complete a change of address request at moversguide.usps.com.

For an updated list of UPS site information, click [here](#).

VOTING

Early voting is taking place until November 3, from 9 AM – 5 PM, at the below locations:

- Black Mountain Library
- East Asheville Library
- Enka-Candler Library
- Fairview Library
- Lester Community Center
- South Buncombe Library
- UNCA Health and Counseling Center
- Weaverville Community Center
- Dr. Wesley Grant Sr. Southside Community Center
- West Asheville Library

Mountain Mobility is providing direct access to three early voting sites via the Trailblazer routes.

- Black Mountain Trailblazer riders – Black Mountain Library
- Enka-Candler Trailblazer riders – Enka-Candler Library

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- North Buncombe Trailblazer riders – Weaverville Community Center

Absentee Voting:

Due to current conditions, all voters are eligible to vote absentee. If voters are leaving the Asheville area, they can go to Buncombe Election Services, 59 Woodfin Place, and fill out the application for an absentee ballot. The application will be processed on the spot (approximately 20 minutes), and voters may then cast their vote immediately, or take their ballot with them and mail it in.

If you requested an absentee ballot but decide to vote in person, simply discard your absentee ballot after voting. If you have been displaced by the storm and have requested an absentee ballot, you can have it be sent to your temporary address and then turn it into any North Carolina County Board of Elections office. Registered voters may request their absentee ballot [here](#).

Voting Day Polling Stations:

Seventeen replacement November 5 polling stations are being confirmed by Buncombe County. The complete and updated list can be found [here](#). Further Election day information, including sample ballots, wait maps, and absentee ballot requests, view can be found [here](#).

Notes:

In times of natural disasters, there is an exception to the ID requirement for voting.