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NEWS CLIPS

SOUTH CAROLINA-DR-4241

Tuesday, January 12, 2016

Issues:

- None.

Summary:

- The House and Senate will gavel in the 2016 session at noon Tuesday. Legislators' top priorities this session will be funding improvements to the state's crumbling roads and bridges, providing flood relief following last fall's historic rainfall.
- Another disaster recovery center in Richland County will close on Wednesday as federal agencies scale back operations in South Carolina.
- Shwedo talked about the state's path to recovery and his method of distributing relief efforts, saying his job is to "accelerate recovery and do it apolitically."
- Soon after the extreme high tides of September came the historic October flood. Anywhere from 10-24 inches of rain fell in our area over a 4 day period creating a catastrophic once in a thousand year flood.
- Though legislators pledge to address road funding and flood relief over the next six months, there's no consensus on what they will do.
- Early registration for the Disaster Recovery Symposium in Myrtle Beach is open to business owners hoping to learn how to protect their business, employees, and customers during a natural disaster or emergency.
- The 13 nonprofits that received grant money are based in hard-hit areas across South Carolina. The recipients in Richland County include Central South Carolina Habitat for Humanity, Home Works of America, St. Bernard Project, United Church of Christ Disaster Ministries and United Way of the Midlands.
- This week we finally will see all of our area rivers fall below flood stage. The only rivers that we are still seeing in flood stage are the Great Pee Dee river, the Little Pee Dee river and the Waccamaw river.
- On Thursday, City leaders in Cayce said they expected to reopen parts of the Riverwalk Park Monday. But because of rain over the weekend, the park remains closed.
- 2016, an election year, brings with it a host of well-documented pressures: The need for roads spending exacerbated by a historic flood in the fall.

Analysis:

- None

Social Listening Analysis:

- None

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Floods

[South Carolina legislature back in session \(News 2\)](#)

By Associated Press

[News 2](#), January 12, 2016

SC Chamber unveiling legislative agenda for 2016

SC Lawmakers Adjourn Thursday Likely Without Roads Bill

Bill in SC Legislature would protect tiger sharks

COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP) – Legislators are back in Columbia for South Carolina’s January-to-June legislative session.

The House and Senate will gavel in the 2016 session at noon Tuesday. Legislators’ top priorities this session will be funding improvements to the state’s crumbling roads and bridges, providing flood relief following last fall’s historic rainfall and addressing a court order to improve public schools.

The state Supreme Court gave legislators until the end of session to come up with a plan for fixing the educational system. That revised November order followed a ruling by justices one year earlier that poor, rural students lack educational opportunities.

Justices were ruling on a lawsuit initially filed by rural districts in 1993.

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[Another Disaster Recovery Center Closing In Richland County](#)

By Avery G. Wilks

[Columbia \(SC\) State](#), January 12, 2016

Another disaster recovery center in Richland County will close on Wednesday as federal agencies scale back operations in South Carolina.

The center at the Richland Library’s main branch in downtown Columbia will become the third in Richland County to close in less than a week. Two others closed Friday.

Disaster recovery centers are staffed by representatives of the **Federal Emergency Management Agency**, U.S. Small Business Administration and South Carolina Emergency Management Division who can help residents affected by the record rain on Oct. 4.

Richland County’s remaining center is at the Southeast branch library, 7421 Garners Ferry Road. Another center at the Irmo branch library in Lexington County also remains open.

Disaster officials have said centers close only after receiving minimal visits over several days.

The deadline to apply for federal disaster assistance was Jan. 4, but some centers remain open to help residents who applied. Those can be found at <http://asd.FEMA.gov/inter/locator/home.htm>.

FEMA’s helpline, 800-621-3362, remains open 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. seven days a week. Applicants also can visit disasterassistance.gov. SBA loan applicants still can visit disasterloan.sba.gov/ela or call the SBA’s helpline at 800-659-2955.

[Pee Dee Disaster Recovery Continues For Shwedo, FEMA](#)

By Jessica Imbimbo

[Florence \(SC\) Morning News](#), January 12, 2016

FLORENCE, S.C. – Disaster Recovery Coordinator Kevin Shwedo’s passion to help those in need flooded the

room Monday when he spoke to the Rotary Club of Florence at Victors.

Shwedo talked about the state's path to recovery and his method of distributing relief efforts, saying his job is to "accelerate recovery and do it apolitically." Shwedo focuses his relief efforts on populations that have been determined as the most vulnerable.

"Where do you have the most mobile homes?" he asked. "Where do you have the most single moms? Where do you have an issue with English being spoken. ... You use all these criteria ... so we know where people got hit the hardest live."

Georgetown, Clarendon, Sumter, Richland and Williamsburg counties were all mentioned by Shwedo as the places that needed the most assistance. Originally, financial aid was being provided through **FEMA** and the SBA. Their deadlines to apply for financial assistance ended Jan. 4, and even though the deadlines have passed, citizens are encouraged to continue to reach out for help.

Derrec Becker, the South Carolina Emergency Management public information coordinator, said those registered with **FEMA** and SBA can stay in contact with those agencies via phone or the Internet.

"We hope that we are meeting expectations to help them recover," Becker said. "If we are not, we want to know about it."

FEMA Media Relations Manager Jim Homstad said individuals who were not able to register before the Jan. 4 deadline can still apply if they explain the reason behind why they couldn't register on time.

"Individuals ... must explain the extenuating circumstances that prevented them from registering within the 90-day application period," Homstad said. "**FEMA** will consider such applications on a case-by-case basis."

Adrienne LaNeave, public affairs specialist for the SBA, said the same rules apply for their disaster relief.

"The SBA still encourages those that have not completed their loan applications to do so immediately and provide whatever their reason as to why they were unable to meet the application deadline," LaNeave said.

Some residents could be denied assistance for various reasons. Shwedo said pre-existing conditions are the most common reason aid is refused to an individual. Shwedo said getting assistance is a multiple-appeal process, which helps reduce fraud. He said the key is not taking no for an answer.

"If you got a 'no,' you should be appealing, in my mind," Shwedo said. "Appeal until you're convinced your appeals are not going anywhere else."

Many services are available at **FEMA** Disaster Recovery Centers, though some locations are shutting down. A disaster recovery center in Lake City will close Wednesday. Thirteen DRCs remain open in the state in multiple counties, including Darlington and Williamsburg counties. Becker said these closures are a good sign, showing that the need for relief is decreasing in that area.

"DRCs are not designed to be open for extended periods of time," Becker said. "If there are not a lot of visitors for several days, it is not feasible to keep it open."

Shwedo said things are moving in the right direction, but the problem does not just go away because someone is no longer affected by the flooding.

"I've got a lot of people living in poverty until we fix this thing," Shwedo said. "There is so much that has to be done ... all I really care about are those individuals who are suffering."

For the most recent information about the S.C. flood recovery, go to scemd.org and FEMA.gov/disaster/4241.

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Another disaster recovery center closing in Richland County (The State)

By Avery G. Wilks

[The State](#), RICHLAND COUNTY, SC, January 11, 2016

Center third to close in a week

Remaining center is at 7421 Garners Ferry Road

Help remains online and through phone lines

Another disaster recovery center in Richland County will close on Wednesday as federal agencies scale back operations in South Carolina.

The center at the Richland Library's main branch in downtown Columbia will become the third in Richland County to close in less than a week. Two others closed Friday.

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2015: A year of extremes (WMBF)

By Andrew Stein

[WMBF](#) Jan 02, 2016

MYRTLE BEACH, SC (WMBF) Mother Nature was very tough on the Palmetto state in 2015. We saw almost every extreme weather possible. Record cold, record ice, record snow to record heat and record rain. No one was spared this year. A recap of 2015 shows that each and every part of this state was touched by some sort of extreme weather and as you read on you will remember some of the most tragic and historic events that have and are still affecting our daily lives.

January brought record cold to parts of the area. Florence dropped to 15° one morning which broke a daily record low. North Myrtle Beach broke a daily record low as well when the airport reported a reading of 17°! Towards the end of January a coastal storm dumped over six inches of rain along the Grand Strand and created very windy conditions as winds gusted over 50 mph in some spots.

February was equally as bad, if not worse. The entire month of February checked in more than 7° below average bringing us in as one of the top ten coldest February's on record. With all the cold in place comes winter weather and we were no stranger to winter weather in February of 2015. A pair of ice storms wreaked havoc in the Pee Dee and Grand Strand. Thousands of people were left without power in wake of these storms.

Sign up for severe weather text alerts and e-mails

We fast forward to May when a rare pre-season Tropical Storm Ana formed. Tropical Storm Ana packed winds of 60 mph and made a direct landfall in Myrtle Beach. She brought gusty winds and minor coastal flooding. Significant erosion took place as Ana moved onshore as well due to the rough surf.

The rest of hurricane season was quiet for coastal South Carolina. By mid summer a full blown heat wave was making us sweat. Temperatures soared above 100° and heat index values reach well into the 110s. The heat and moisture of summer allowed the numerous summer storms we see to become severe. Thunderstorms with gusty winds, hail and tremendous lightning frequented the inland and coastal areas.

September was quiet for much of the area except for the immediate coast. A rare astronomical full moon and lunar eclipsed aligned nicely with onshore winds and brought us intense coastal flooding. Coastal flooding like what we saw in September hasn't been seen in this area since Hurricane Hugo in 1989. Ocean high tides rose 7 feet above normal tearing apart our beaches and causing immense damage to our dunes.

Soon after the extreme high tides of September came the historic October flood. Anywhere from 10-24 inches of rain fell in our area over a 4 day period creating a catastrophic once in a thousand year flood. Record high river levels were also measured in lieu of the record rain which flooded dozens of homes across the region.

November brought additional flooded to the ground soaked region as we saw a system dump 3-4 inches of rain near Conway.

December brought us record warmth. The entire area saw high temperatures run 15-20 degrees above average some days. The prolonged heat we saw allowed us to become the warmest December on record in North Myrtle Beach and Florence. Kids were playing in the waters of our beaches on Christmas day when highs neared 80°.

The entire year in both North Myrtle Beach and Florence rung in as the wettest year ever recorded.

To sum up 2015 and the weather events that occurred in one story cannot be done. To combine the affects, the impacts and the lives that were touched this year due to the weather is unimaginable and we will hopefully be prepared the next time a historic weather event takes place.

Needless to say, 2015 was a very active year and it put meteorologists to work. Through the thick and thin of it all - South Carolina and the events we saw has only made us stronger and more weather aware and all we can do for now is to always be prepared. Our area is not limited to one particular type of weather but all types and every extreme of weather that Mother Nature can throw at us.

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SC Legislature faces debates over roadwork, flood relief (Augusta Chronicle)

By Seanna Adcox

[Augusta Chronicle](#), Jan. 9, 2016

COLUMBIA — Though legislators pledge to address road funding and flood relief over the next six months, there's no consensus on what they will do.

A \$1.3 billion windfall makes a compromise even harder. And in a year when every House and Senate seat is up for grabs, concern over attracting challengers could delay votes until after the March 30 filing deadline.

But legislators do agree there's a bright side to October's catastrophic flooding, which caused roads — many of them already in bad shape — to crumble. At the Oct. 5 peak, more than 500 roads and bridges were closed across the state, including a long stretch of Interstate 95 that forced a 168-mile detour.

"The flood highlights just how poor our roads and bridges are," Sen. Greg Hembree, R-North Myrtle Beach, said at a pre-session gathering Thursday. "It brings a new sense of urgency that's necessary."

Fixing South Carolina's roads topped last year's priority list, too.

The House passed a plan last April that would raise an additional \$400 million annually. A bill raising roughly twice that through increases in gas taxes, vehicle sales taxes and license fees reached the Senate floor, but a week's long filibuster by Sen. Tom Davis blocked a vote.

That bill is back up for debate when the legislative session resumes Tuesday.

"The focus has been on raising the gas tax instead of the need. Once people understand the need, we'll figure out a way to fund it," said Rep. Kenny Bingham, R-Cayce. "The need is now obvious."

Davis, R-Beaufort, continues his call for reforms first. He said he believes more senators see the need to change the Department of Transportation's governance structure. He can agree to a gas tax increase later, he said, if the money is spent wisely and more is still needed.

The \$1.3 billion additional revenue available to spend — much of it surpluses from previous years — complicates the debate, said Senate Majority Leader Harvey Peeler.

Agencies' budget requests would gobble up all of that and much more.

But that money makes it "very difficult to go back home and explain to citizens how we're raising their taxes," said Peeler, R-Gaffney. "It cuts both ways — people will vote against you if you vote for a gas tax and they'll vote against you if you don't fix their roads."

Republican leaders say any gas tax increase will be accompanied by a tax cut elsewhere. They don't agree on how much.

"When you raise the gas tax, you have the benefit of those using the roads paying for the roads, but we have enough money to cut taxes at the same time," Hembree said.

Democrats say it's folly to deal with income taxes inside a roads bill.

Roughly \$115 million of the extra revenue will cover the state's match for federal money spent amid the disaster.

Legislators of both parties say the state should also provide money to farmers who were devastated by flooding at harvest time. The Department of Agriculture estimates direct crop losses from the flooding at \$376 million.

"Everyone I've talked to is worried we may well lose many, many farmers in South Carolina if we don't provide them with aid," said House Speaker Jay Lucas, R-Hartsville.

But the amount and how it would be distributed is unknown. Even less clear is whether legislators will help other property owners. The Federal Emergency Management Agency has awarded more than \$79 million for home repairs, temporary housing and other disaster-related expenses. But that's an average of just \$3,000 per approved household, and roughly 70 percent of the more than 83,000 people who applied for help were denied.

"If they need a roof, FEMA gives them enough money for a shingle," said House Minority Leader Todd Rutherford.

He and other Democrats want the state to use surplus money to help restore homes. But no Republican at Thursday's gathering backed the idea.

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Roads an issue on South Carolina lawmakers minds this week (WRDW)

By: Preston Willett

[WRDW News 12](#) Aiken, Jan 10, 2016

South Carolina road problems

Road improvements in Aiken

South Carolina lawmakers head back to Columbia with fixing roads a main issue.

Sunday, Jan. 10, 2015 News 12 at 11 O'Clock

AIKEN, S.C. (WRDW) -- It's been a problem for drivers for some time like Louise Gerrideau.

"I think we need some road work done. We have a lot of potholes that need to be fixed and sometimes you don't

see them until you're on them," Gerrideau said.

Other drivers agree.

"Most of them need some work and I heard they had some extra money, so kind of hoping they might divert it in that direction," Jeffrey Grinnell said.

And he's right. There is 1.3 billion dollars in additional revenue in South Carolina's budget, the same amount as the Power Ball Jackpot. But with so many other state issues, the money being used on roads and infrastructure is not a guarantee.

"They need to, but you have people that will not spend, will not tax anybody for anything else and you got those that are willing if it goes to support something I can see," Arthur Carlson said.

Last April, the House passed a bill to put \$400 million annually towards roads by increasing some taxes like at the pump, but it never passed in the senate. Now they're revisiting the same bill this year.

"I don't mind it. I don't mind paying for something if I'm getting it. If it means a few more cents on the gas I can live with that," Carlson said.

But some like Gerrideau are not a fan of the bill, "It could be, it could be a help, but I don't endorse it because the gas was so high for so long."

But some think that October's flooding and the more than 500 roads it closed could be a motivation to get it done this time around.

"The thing is with the floods that we had in Columbia, it showed the bridges and the infrastructure and of course in our country in general that's an issue, so you got to spend the money because when it goes out, you're going to have to spend it and it's going to be more expensive," Grinnell said.

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Local officials prep for annual Disaster Recovery Symposium (WMBF)

By Mandy Noell

[WMBF](#) MYRTLE BEACH, SC, Jan 06, 2016

Early registration for the Disaster Recovery Symposium in Myrtle Beach is open to business owners hoping to learn how to protect their business, employees, and customers during a natural disaster or emergency.

According to the National Insurance Association, 25 percent of businesses that are impacted by a disaster do not reopen after. Local emergency management leaders encourage business owners in the city limits of Myrtle Beach to develop a plan before disaster strikes. That is what this symposium is designed to help you do. And the symposium will help owners prepare their employees as well.

"And also give you a list of things that all of your employees should be aware of," said Diane Moskow-Mackenzie, the Senior Planner for the City of Myrtle Beach. "Like, where are the shut off valves? Where is the accounting system located in case the power goes off? What's the computer operations if you're relying on those? What's your backup plan for that? Where's your generator if you need electricity to keep things going."

Moskow-Mackenzie said the problem is that most people do not think a disaster will happen or that it won't affect them. But disaster can strike at any time, and we are vulnerable to any kind of disaster along the Grand Strand. Whether it's a fire, wind storm, ice, flood, hurricane, or power outage, being unprepared can be disastrous.

"We're building more and more buildings," said Moskow-Mackenzie. "If we had a devastating fire here, we're building, we're more compact now, we used to be very spread out. We're not. You saw what happened in Georgetown on Front Street. It took out an entire block. It can happen."

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One SC Fund awarded \$500,000 in grants to nonprofits working on flood recovery (The State)

By Avery G. Wilks

[The State](#), COLUMBIA, SC, January 6, 2016

Nonprofits can apply for second round of grants through Friday

The One SC Flood Relief Fund has awarded its first round of grants, totaling \$500,000, to support more than a dozen nonprofits working on recovery from the historic flooding Oct. 4.

The 13 nonprofits that received grant money are based in hard-hit areas across South Carolina. The recipients in Richland County include Central South Carolina Habitat for Humanity, Home Works of America, St. Bernard Project, United Church of Christ Disaster Ministries and United Way of the Midlands.

The nonprofits' projects range from mold remediation to complete home rebuilding, according to a news release from the Central Carolina Community Foundation, which runs the fund and accepts donations at www.onescfund.org.

"We've asked the people of South Carolina to step up, and what we've seen so far is the best in our state – but

there's more work to be done," Gov. Nikki Haley said in the release. "If you were blessed and did not have damage to your home, if you were blessed and able to get back into a safe place, pay it forward. Give whatever you can to support the One SC Flood Relief Fund."

Nonprofit organizations can apply for the second round of grants until 6 p.m. on Friday.

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All area rivers fall below flood stage this week (WMBF)

By Andrew Stein

[WMBF](#), Jan 10, 2016

MYRTLE BEACH, SC After a long awaited period of time. This week we finally will see all of our area rivers fall below flood stage. The only rivers that we are still seeing in flood stage are the Great Pee Dee river, the Little Pee Dee river and the Waccamaw river.

The Great and Little Pee Dee river are both in minor flood stage and are projected to fall below flood stage by Wednesday.

The Waccamaw river is in moderate flood stage and is expected to fall into minor flood stage by Thursday and then below flood stage by this upcoming weekend.

With no rain in the forecast until next weekend we shouldn't see any further delays with the water receding.

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Weekend rain delays reopening of parts of Cayce Riverwalk (WIS)

By Mary King

[WISTV 10](#), CAYCE, SC Jan 11, 2016 8:13

Weekend rain has delayed the reopening of parts of the Cayce Riverwalk.

On Thursday, City leaders in Cayce said they expected to reopen parts of the Riverwalk Park Monday. But because of rain over the weekend, the park remains closed.

"The trail is still slick and not safe yet," City spokesperson Ashley Hunter told WIS Monday morning. "It will depend on the weather today. But Cayce crews are working hard to get 3 parts of Riverwalk and Timmerman Trail back up."

City of Cayce Mayor Elise Partin says the parks department has been working around the clock to reopen at least three of the park's four phases again.

"We are hoping that by Monday we should have this open. The waters have receded at this point, but the last two days we had freezing temperatures so that kept our staff from being able to be down here safely and to clear the silt," said Partin. "Hopefully by Monday we'll have it open and they are working hard to make that happen."

The mayor said since last August the eight miles of the Riverwalk that are within Cayce's city limits have flooded at least four times, closing all four phases. That includes twice since October's historic floods.

Each time Partin says the parks department has had to remove downed trees and massive amounts silt to make the park accessible to the public. That includes 30 downed trees and more than 500 tons of silt that was left on the Riverwalk

in Cayce after October's floods.

"The Riverwalk is designed to flood, and it's okay that it floods, but it does take an enormous amount of work from our parks staff," said Partin. "They are absolutely phenomenal, that as soon as the waters receded they were able to get the Riverwalk open in a number of days."

The city's parks department was honored this past Tuesday night at the Cayce city council meeting with the Whole Sole Award for their cleanup efforts.

Mayor Partin said the only part of the Cayce Riverwalk that will not reopen is phase two which runs from the train trestle to the Riverland Park Neighborhood.

The Mayor says that area was first heavily damaged last August when the city received six inches of rain and it has to be re-engineered.

"We have that section right in the middle right now that is closed because of enormous safety issues," said Partin. "So we have one part where the sidewalk is eroded, and there's nothing underneath the sidewalk right now. We have a place where there are footers that are not as stable as they were before the flooding rains, and so that will have to be re engineered."

Partin says she expects that part of the Riverwalk to be reopen by the summer.

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All area rivers fall below flood stage this week (WMBF)

By Andrew Stein

[WMBF](#) MYRTLE BEACH, SC Jan 10, 2016

After a long awaited period of time. This week we finally will see all of our area rivers fall below flood stage. The only rivers that we are still seeing in flood stage are the Great Pee Dee river, the Little Pee Dee river and the Waccamaw river.

The Great and Little Pee Dee river are both in minor flood stage and are projected to fall below flood stage by Wednesday.

The Waccamaw river is in moderate flood stage and is expected to fall into minor flood stage by Thursday and then below flood stage by this upcoming weekend.

With no rain in the forecast until next weekend we shouldn't see any further delays with the water receding.

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Local officials prep for annual Disaster Recovery Symposium (WMBF)

By Mandy Noell

[WMBF](#) Jan 06, 2016

MYRTLE BEACH, SC— Early registration for the Disaster Recovery Symposium in Myrtle Beach is open to business owners hoping to learn how to protect their business, employees, and customers during a natural disaster or emergency.

According to the National Insurance Association, 25 percent of businesses that are impacted by a disaster do not reopen after. Local emergency management leaders encourage business owners in the city limits of Myrtle Beach to develop a plan before disaster strikes. That is what this symposium is designed to help you do. And the symposium will help owners prepare their employees as well.

"And also give you a list of things that all of your employees should be aware of," said Diane Moskow-Mackenzie, the Senior Planner for the City of Myrtle Beach. "Like, where are the shut off valves? Where is the accounting system located in case the power goes off? What's the computer operations if you're relying on those? What's your backup plan for that? Where's your generator if you need electricity to keep things going."

Moskow-Mackenzie said the problem is that most people do not think a disaster will happen or that it won't affect them. But disaster can strike at any time, and we are vulnerable to any kind of disaster along the Grand Strand. Whether it's a fire, wind storm, ice, flood, hurricane, or power outage, being unprepared can be disastrous.

"We're building more and more buildings," said Moskow-Mackenzie. "If we had a devastating fire here, we're building, we're more compact now, we used to be very spread out. We're not. You saw what happened in Georgetown on Front Street. It took out an entire block. It can happen."

At the symposium, speakers from **FEMA**, local emergency management, and local business owners will present. There will be a panel of experts from local utility companies, hospitals, the Myrtle Beach International Airport, and Coastal Carolina University. And part of the symposium will include an evacuation drill. Business owners will also learn how to handle social media during a disaster to effectively communicate with employees and customers.

Right now, event planners are preparing for the symposium on January 29. Two Myrtle Beach city leaders are spending a week in Maryland at the Emergency Training Center that **FEMA** coordinates. They are learning about a program called HAZUS. It takes a current map of somewhere, like Myrtle Beach, and determines the impact any type of hurricane would have on the area. With the new program, the leaders will turn it into a presentation at the symposium and look at the effects Hurricane Hugo would have on our geographical landscape today.

Moskow-Mackenzie emphasized the goal of the symposium is to make sure you are prepared before a disaster strikes, prepared to respond during a disaster, and prepared to reopen after a disaster.

"People who are not prepared, they do not have the required insurance that they need," explained Moskow-Mackenzie. "They don't have a plan in place on how they're going to continue operations. How do they stay in touch with their employees? Do they have housing off site for their employees if they're unable to get to their own homes? How are they going to keep going."

The symposium will be held January 29 at the Convention Center. It costs \$25 to pre-register and \$30 at the door to attend. This price includes lunch. Click here to find more information about the symposium and how to register: <http://www.cityofmyrtlebeach.com/disasterrecovery.pdf>

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TV/Radio Clips



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01/11/2016 17:39:22

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News 19 @ 5am (News)

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