

**From:** Schimsa, Rebecca <RebeccaSchimsa@gov.sc.gov>  
**To:** Haley, Nikkigovhaley@gov.sc.gov  
Haley, MichaelMichaelHaley@gov.sc.gov  
Patel, SwatiSwatiPatel@gov.sc.gov  
**CC:** Pisarik, HollyHollyPisarik@gov.sc.gov  
Godfrey, RobRobGodfrey@gov.sc.gov  
Priester, NicoleNicolePriester@gov.sc.gov  
**Date:** 10/2/2015 5:43:27 AM  
**Subject:** Re: EMD Update - Flooding Operations

---

Following the 5:00 a.m. Advisory:

Forecast: Joaquin is now farther east at sea and should not threaten the east coast. Rainfall is forecast to increase in the Upstate and now stands at up to 18-19 inches statewide (this will probably continue to fluctuate). The first wave of heavy rain should hit this evening.

Effects Today: Road closures may already be happening in coastal areas where we should expect to see the first signs of flooding due to lower elevation levels. Charleston County offices have decided to close, and others may do so as well.

This Morning's Priorities:

(1) EMD will send over a draft federal assistance request letter for the Governor to sign and send to the President/FEMA. The request letter does not obligate us, but if approved, it opens up options for federal resources if needed. Do we have authorization to stamp sign this letter?

(2) Identify county unmet needs this morning. EMD is hosting two county calls (coastal; then midlands/upstate) at 9am and 9:45am, respectively. I will try to listen in on those calls.

(3) EMD is concerned that - because Joaquin is no longer a threat - the public will go back to business as usual. They would like our press offices to coordinate messaging this morning regarding staying off the roads and seeking shelter if needed.

Note - EMD is also concerned about the home Clemson and Carolina games and the amount of traffic and accidents they will cause. These decisions are local as decided by the universities.

Sent from my iPhone

On Oct 2, 2015, at 12:02 AM, Schimsa, Rebecca <RebeccaSchimsa@gov.sc.gov> wrote:

Following tonight's 11pm advisory:

FORECAST: Joaquin is now not forecasted to make landfall on the east coast. However: Rainfall level forecasts have increased and are expected to be heaviest in a line from Charleston to Columbia to Greenville, which equates up to 23" in the Midlands. South

Carolina's rain event is expected to be worse than NC's or any other state. With Joaquin expected not to hit the U.S., then all eyes are expected to be turned towards SC.

\*\*\*Below is a summary of key issues to know going into the weekend's operations.\*\*\*

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GOVERNOR'S MESSAGING** : EMD believes that what the Governor says to her directors matters and sets priorities. The biggest help that EMD needs is not losing tomorrow, Friday, as a day of preparation before the serious operations begin **on Friday night** through the weekend. This is expected to be a long-term problem until mid next week, even after the rain stops.

**PUBLIC TALKING POINTS** : Similar to winter storms, the Governor is encouraged to message that citizens should leave work early and stay home before the serious rains start to fall **tomorrow evening**. Citizens need to stay off the roads and be aware if they live in low-lying areas to take personal responsibility to get to places of safety.

**EMD PRIORITIES** : The priority now for EMD is to drive preparedness for agencies tomorrow, to get out media messages for the public, and then to respond rapidly **tomorrow night** for life safety. It will be a challenge to sustain significant night-time operations.

**ROAD & BRIDGE DEBRIS (DOT)**: A major issue is that the water will pick up debris and carry it to clog underneath and all around bridges, and the flow will put pressure on the pilings and could cause bridges to collapse or flood. Potentially, dozens and dozens of bridges could be lost. DOT will be monitoring bridges closely and preparing for detours. Also, traffic signage for road closure and sandbags will be key for prepping tomorrow.

**DAMS (DHEC)**: We have more than 5,000 dams across the state, and if the earth gets too soft, they are quite vulnerable, especially over an extended period of time.

**LOCAL WATER/SEWER FACILITIES** : One of our biggest weakness is ESF-3 (public works and engineering, such as water, sewer, and waste water systems). All of these teams are locally owned and operated, primarily owned by municipalities and counties. There is no state entity that keeps public works open, such as there is for firefighter or roads. If locals need assistance, then we have little capability at the state level and so would most likely need to turn to federal assistance. In addition, our water and sewer facilities are usually located in our most low-lying areas. Potentially, areas could be cut off from these services for days or weeks.

**SHELTERS (DSS & RED CROSS)**: Based on need, counties will be contacting DSS and Red Cross to stand up shelters. The locations of shelters will not be determined until a need is presented, so DSS will have to react quickly as calls are made. It is possible that nursing homes or medical facilities may have to evacuate or at least move patients and electrical systems to higher floors. (Unlike hurricane evacuations, where the need for shelters is obvious, there is no such anticipated need for flooding - it's case by case as the need arises.)

**POWER OUTAGES (ORS)**: Although high winds are not expected, there is the possibility for tornadoes and the heavy rain could knock over transformers and cause the ground to be soggy enough to have outages.

FEDERAL ASSISTANCE (FEMA): Eight personnel from FEMA IMAT (incident management assistance team) will arrive in Columbia tomorrow and will work out of the SEOC. If we need federal assistance to prepare for or fight the flooding, then EMD may send over an Emergency Declaration Request for Direct Federal Assistance, which is access to federal teams and resources, such as USAR, generators, sandbags, additional military help, etc. Once the Governor sends a request, FEMA would approve/deny the request within a few hours. (Note that NC and SC have FEMA's main attention at this time). Mike Moore out of Atlanta (FEMA Region IV) is predesignated to serve as our federal resource coordinator.

Expect the next update [tomorrow around 6:30 a.m.](#)