

Title: **ASSESSING DAMAGE**
 Author: STAFF/WIRE REPORTS
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HURRICANE MATTHEW

ASSESSING DAMAGE

Thousands remain without power; see ways you can help

STAFF/WIRE REPORTS

Two days after Hurricane Matthew battered the South Carolina coast, hundreds of thousands of people remained without power as state officials continued to assess damage.

Dozens of bridges and hundreds of roads remain closed.

Edisto Beach is still blocked off. Police have a checkpoint about two miles from the beach in front of a convenience store and are not letting residents or sightseers in.

Gov. Nikki Haley, who was traveling

the coast and surveying flood damage, said while evacuation orders have been lifted for the state, residents are not being allowed on Hilton Head Island, Harbor Island, Fripp Island and Hunting Island because of continued problems with downed trees and storm damage.

Several homes on the island were destroyed or damaged in the storm and power is out to the island and seems to be out for miles up the rural road leading to the town.

Flooding is the biggest concern as more problems are expected along the Little Pee Dee River, the Lumber River,

the Waccamaw River and the Black River, said Mark Keel, chief of the State Law Enforcement Division.

Keel is working with the Department of Natural Resources to put river patrols out to make sure that the property of those forced to evacuate is safe from looters.

Three people have been killed in the storm.

State transportation officials say there have been about 300 road and bridge closures because of the storm.

See STORM, Page 5A

Storm

Continued from Page 1A

About 475,000 customers are without electricity. That's down from more than 850,000 at the height of the storm.

Three South Carolinians were killed and hundreds of thousands forced to evacuate their homes in the storm.

The heaviest rains from Hurricane Matthew which swept through South Carolina over the weekend were in the Pee Dee and the Beaufort areas.

Figures from the National Weather Service show that more than 15 inches of rain fell in Mullins while more than 14 inches was recorded in Marion in the Pee Dee. More than 13 inches was reported in Kingstree.

More than a foot of rain fell in the Galli-

vants Ferry and Conway areas of Horry County while nearly 12 inches fell in Florence County.

The Beaufort Marine Corps Air Station received 14 inches and Hilton Head Island received 11.

Between 10 and 11 inches were recorded at locations in the Charleston area.

By the end of Mon-

day, only two of the 17 patients evacuated to Anderson from Beaufort Memorial Hospital will remain in the AnMed Health Medical Center, officials said.

One patient was discharged to the family Saturday and 14 more will return today by ambulance to Beaufort Memorial Hospital, which has reopened after closing in anticipation of possible power outages caused by Hurricane Matthew. The remaining

two patients are staying for medical procedures.

Now that all evacuation orders have been lifted, those who left are returning to destruction and in some cases, utter devastation and there are some simple ways to help.

Haley has expanded the One SC fund in wake of Hurricane Matthew. The fund was created in the aftermath of last year's thousand year flood. The fund has distributed more \$2 million in grants to non-profits supporting flood recovery project and helped more than 1,500 families return home.

Donations to the fund go directly to nonprofit organizations helping South Carolinians recover and rebuild after natural disasters.

How to give:

» Visit onescfund.org to make an online donation

» Mail a check to: Cen-

tral Carolina Community Foundation, One SC Fund, 2711 Middleburg Drive, Suite 213, Columbia, SC 29204

The American Red Cross also makes it easy to help people directly affected by Hurricane Matthew.

How to give:

» Visit redcross.org/donate/

» donation, fill out the form and choose Hurricane Matthew in the dropdown menu under the words "Use my donation to support"

» To donate to a general disaster relief fund by text, just send the word REDCROSS to 90999 to give \$10 to American Red Cross Disaster Relief

The United Way of South Carolina is looking for volunteers to help with recovery and assistance for those affected by the storm. Interested volunteers can

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sign up at the United
Way website now.

— *The Associated
Press* and staff writer
Elizabeth LaFleur con-
tributed to this report.



RAINIER EHRHARDT/AP

A boat passes a church in Nichols, S.C., on Monday. Nearly 1 million homes and businesses still did not have power Monday morning in the Carolinas after Hurricane Matthew.

Title: **In Carolinas, water rescues continue; more flooding ahead**
 Author: John Bacon @jmbacon USA TODAY
 Size: 52.39 column inches
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In Carolinas, water rescues continue; more flooding ahead

John Bacon

@jmbacon
 USA TODAY

Hundreds of heroic, swift-water rescues took place Monday in North and South Carolina while forecasters warned that some swollen rivers in the Southeast won't crest for two weeks amid Hurricane Matthew's devastation.

Even as the storm rolled well out to sea, more than 1 million people along the East Coast from North Carolina to Florida remained without power.

"Matthew is off the map in the ocean, but it's still right here for the people of North Carolina," Gov. Pat McCrory said Monday. "We have helicopter and swift-water rescues underway. ... We have people on their roofs as we speak."

Matthew was blamed for hundreds of deaths in Haiti and more than 20 in the USA. Monday, a 9-year-old Florida boy succumbed to apparent carbon monoxide poisoning from a gas generator in his home.

Ten deaths were reported in

North Carolina, four in Florida, three each in South Carolina and Georgia and one in Virginia.

In North Carolina, more than 1,400 rescues took place across the state in recent days, and a levee break stranded 1,500 Lumberton residents Monday in homes flooded with knee-deep water, McCrory said.

Evacuations were underway as rivers continued to rise in eastern and central areas of the state, he said.

"This is a disaster which has maxed out all of our resources and personnel," Lumberton Rescue and EMS said in a Facebook post. "Please stay away from our area (if) at all possible. Too many vehicles and too many sightseers. We are in a state of emergency."

Some rivers, bloated from a foot or more of rain, won't crest for two weeks, AccuWeather warned. "We predicted this three days ago, and it's actually happening," McCrory said.

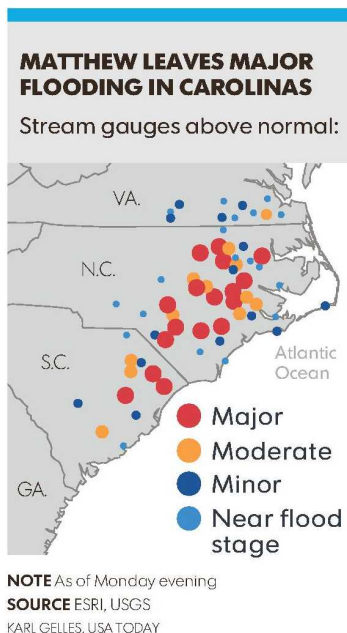
Hydrologist Mark Hamill of the Southeast River Forecast Center said flooding could continue for a couple of weeks.

Dozens of river and stream gauges remain in flood stage across the Carolinas and Virginia, and five locations in North Carolina were at record highs, according to the National Weather Service.

Matthew was downgraded Sunday to a post-tropical cyclone. President Obama signed disaster declarations, making federal funding available for debris removal and other urgent needs.

South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley lifted Matthew evacuation orders in the final two counties Monday. Haley flew over some of the state's flooded rivers Monday. "There is a lot of damage, and a lot of first floors are gone," she said.

Contributing: Doyle Rice, USA TODAY; Elliott Jones, Indian River (Fla.) Press Journal



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CHRIS SEWARD, AP

South Edgecombe Fire and Rescue workers rescue several dogs that were trapped in homes flooded by rising water from Town Creek in Pinetops, N.C., on Sunday.

Title: **Have there been break-ins? What refrigerated food is OK?**
 Author: STAFF REPORTS newsroom@islandpacket.com
 Size: 70.68 column inches
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YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Have there been break-ins? What refrigerated food is OK?

STAFF REPORTS

newsroom@islandpacket.com

The Island Packet and The Beaufort Gazette asked whether our readers had any questions about Hurricane Matthew and storm-related issues, and you responded. Here are some of the most-asked questions:

Q: Have there been reports of break-ins in Beaufort County?

A: Capt. Bob Bromage of the Beaufort County Sheriff's Office said officers have responded to 27 calls of break-ins or burglaries since Gov. Nikki Haley's evacuation orders were given last Wednesday.

Of those, nine proved to be actual break-in cases.

"Deputies are responding to reports," Bromage said. "We hope it's a very low number, based on the curfew and other steps that were taken. But we do anticipate (some incidents)."

Q: What refrigerated food is OK to keep after a power outage?

A: The most obvious way to know is the good old sniff test.

If it doesn't smell like it did when you left, you probably want to toss it. Don't rely solely on this, though, and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services does not recommend people taste food to find out whether it's still OK.

Check for the "refrigerate after opening" label. If you lost power for a significant amount of time, then those items are probably goners.

Q: Am I allowed to start burning tree branches and yard refuse?

A: No.

The South Carolina Forestry Commission has issued a statewide burning ban until further notice to reduce possible wildfire ignitions, according to the Beaufort County Sheriff's Office.

This will allow the Forestry Commission and local fire departments to focus on emergency operations related to re-entry, the release said.

Citizens are advised to be extremely vigilant until the ban has lifted.

Q: When will the USPS, UPS and FedEx start delivery again?

A: The U.S. Postal Service announced it would resume all mail services – delivery, pickup and post-office operations – on Tuesday.

For those in heavily damaged areas, though, residents need to do a little preparation.

- Make sure no debris blocks access to the mailbox.

- If your mailbox is destroyed or badly damaged, replace it with a receptacle that has your address clearly displayed.

- If your residence will be uninhabitable for some time, contact the Postal Service to place mail on temporary hold or file a temporary change of address card.

FedEx officials said they would expand service to "accessible areas," though some customers will experience delays.

UPS had not responded to The Island Packet and The Beaufort Gazette's query as of 3:30 p.m.

Q: How can we help?

A: Here is what we know so far:

- **Samaritan's Purse** is looking for people to help remove trees, patch roofs and clean flooded homes along with other physical labor. To help, go by Low-country Community Church at 801 Buckwalter Parkway in Bluffton.

- **Mercy Chefs** is providing meals to emergency personnel and others helping to clean up after Hurricane Matthew. To find out how to help, go to mercychefs.com.

If you know of places in need of volunteers, please email us at newsroom@islandpacket.com.

Q: When can MCAS and Laurel Bay return?

A: The evacuation order for MCAS Beaufort and Laurel Bay was terminated at 12:45 p.m. Monday. Personnel and their families are allowed to return to the air station and Laurel Bay housing.

Q: When will Parris Island reopen, and when will personnel return?

A: A news release from Parris Island representatives sent out Monday says all nonessential Department of Defense personnel and their families are now allowed to return to Parris Island.

According to the news release, authorities have assessed the conditions of the island and deemed it safe for return. All personnel should return by Wednesday to resume work.

Q: Will Marines still be graduating on Friday?

A: Yes. According to Parris Island representatives, the naturalization and graduation ceremony for Golf and Oscar companies will continue.

The ceremony has been rescheduled for 1 p.m. Friday at the Peatross Parade Deck.

Guests cannot access the island until 8 a.m. Friday.

Q: Will Beaufort County employees get paid for when offices were closed for Hurricane Matthew?

A: Yes. Josh Gruber, deputy county administrator, said Monday that employees will be paid for the days the county offices were closed due to severe weather.

Gruber said essentially all employees who were scheduled to work and

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were physically ready, willing and able to work but couldn't due to weather will be paid.

Those on worker's compensation will not be paid, according to Gruber.

Q: When will Beaufort County employees return to work?

A: Unclear.

According to the Beaufort County website, county offices will remain closed at least through

Tuesday.

County employees who are not a part of disaster recovery are instructed to continue monitoring the county's website (www.bcgov.net), email and other information

channels for updates.

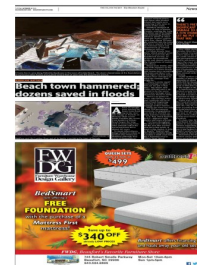
If you have a question or information you think would be important or helpful to share with others, email **newsroom@islandpacket.com**.



REBECCA LURYE rlurye@islandpacket.com

A pier on Marshland Road on Hilton Head Island was damaged by the storm.

Title: **Beach town hammered; dozens saved in floods**
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HURRICANE MATTHEW

Beach town hammered; dozens saved in floods

Associated Press

About 150 people were rescued by boats from flooding in the river-side village of Nichols on Monday while across South Carolina the ocean-front hamlet of Edisto Beach began the long work of recovering from what officials called the worst hurricane hit in almost 40 years.

In many other places, things started to return to normal after Hurricane Matthew although hundreds of thousands remained without power and those who headed inland last week were enduring traffic jams to return to the coast.

Matthew dumped 15 inches of rain in Marion County, sending the Lumber River out of its banks and inundating Nichols, which is about 10 miles from the North Carolina state line. About 150 people crowded into the town hall where they were rescued by boat by National Guard and Department of Natural Resources officers.

In Edisto Beach, Matthew, which pushed several feet of sand onto the beachfront avenue, destroyed an oceanfront home and clawed away at the foundations of numerous others.

Mayor Jane Darby, who met with reporters at the entrance to Edisto Beach, said teams were surveying the town and there's no early figure on how many homes were damaged or what the damage total might be.

"There's pretty significant damage to quite a few, let me put it that way," the mayor said. Town officials said it appeared to be the worst hurricane damage since Hurricane David in 1979.

There's no power in town, only limited water and residents will be allowed back beginning Tuesday to assess the damage to their homes.

While the town has only about 500 permanent residents, its population can swell to 30,000 on busy summer weekends.

U.S. Rep. Mark Sanford, R-S.C., appeared with Darby and town officials.

"I've been throughout the district and I think by far the area that was hardest hit in this storm, at least in this district, is Edisto Beach," Sanford said. His district includes South Carolina's south coast from the Charleston area to Hilton Head Island.

Gov. Nikki Haley on Monday lifted the last of the coastal evacuation

orders when she said people could return to Horry and Georgetown counties. Traffic was heavy returning to the coast and, according to a Department of Transportation website, travel between Columbia and Charleston was taking about 30 minutes longer than normal early Monday evening.

Utility workers cut the number of power outages statewide to about 400,000 by Monday afternoon, less than half of the peak of 850,000 outages at the height of the storm.

A fundraising effort started to help victims of last year's historic floods in South Carolina is being extended to help victims of Hurricane Matthew.

Haley and officials from the Central Carolina Community Foundation say that the One SC Fund is now accepting donations to help hurricane victims.

The fund was started last year in the wake of what's been called a 1,000-year flood in South Carolina.

To date, One SC has distributed \$2 million in grants to nonprofit organizations supporting flood recovery projects. Officials say it has helped 1,500 South Carolina families get back in their homes.

Donations for hurricane victims can be made at www.onescfund.org.

“

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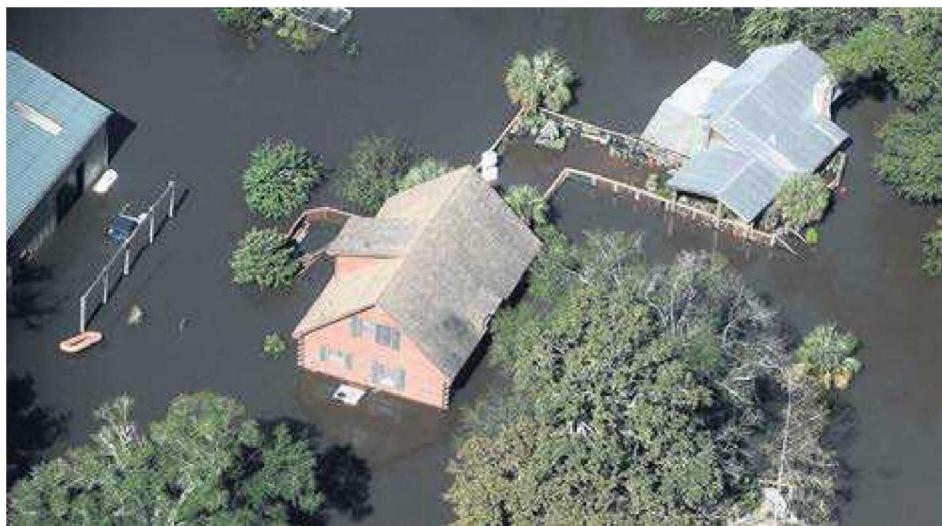
Edisto Beach Mayor Jane Darby

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JEFF SINER The Charlotte Observer

A home lies in ruins along Palmetto Boulevard in the town of Edisto Beach. The storm clawed away at the foundations of numerous other homes and pushed several feet of sand onto the beachfront avenue.



RAINIER EHRHARDT AP

Matthew sent the Lumber River out of its banks, inundating the town of Nichols.

Title: **How bad is the damage across Beaufort County?**
 Author: BY KELLY MEYERHOFER kmeyerhofer@islandpacket.com
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HURRICANE AFTERMATH

How bad is the damage across Beaufort County?

BY KELLY MEYERHOFER

kmeyerhofer@islandpacket.com

Beaufort County residents are in the dark. County Administrator Gary Kubic said 54,000 residents were without power as of Monday afternoon.

But some property owners are also in the dark about the extent of the damage Hurricane Matthew did to their properties.

That's in part because recovery crews worked to clear primary roads Monday, so the status of secondary streets isn't even known by folks on the ground.

Here's what Beaufort County officials reported they've been briefed on or seen firsthand:

HILTON HEAD

Matthew caused an "unprecedented amount of damage on Hilton Head Island," Gov. Nikki Haley said in a news conference Monday. "Trees are down

FROM PAGE 3A

DAMAGE

seen any homes "completely obliterated" or portions of home debris in streets or yards.

But it's "still way too dangerous" to let people in. He declined to let a

reporter or photographer in to inspect the gated community.

Earlier flooding that made Shipyard Drive impassable has subsided, Shipyard Plantation gener-

al manager Salley Warren said, but most secondary roads are still blocked by debris. She reported no wind damage, meaning no roofs were ripped off homes, but some houses

hard hit and struggling to recover," Riley said. Major arteries in Sea Pines are still being cleared, so assessing properties on secondary roads is not an option, said Toby McSwain, director of safety, security, and transportation at Sea Pines.

"I can't even begin to tell you when we'll start (secondary roads)," McSwain said Monday. Major thoroughfares that are accessible include:

- Greenwood gate to Frasier Circle.
- Frasier to Harbour Town.
- Some portions of the stretch from Greenwood Drive to South Sea Pines Drive.

He reported some homes weathered Matthew well, as did the Plantation Beach Club.

But others weren't so lucky. He said he couldn't estimate how many homes

had trees fallen through or against them.

Lagoons filled with debris are clogged and cannot flow properly, but Sea Pines is "not even close to getting around to address(ing) that."

McSwain did get a chance to see oceanfront properties, he said, and the dunes are completely gone, "completely washed away," he said.

Roughly 50 percent of major roads are accessible in Hilton Head Plantation, said general manager Peter Kristian.

"It's a work in progress," he said Monday. "Literally thousands of trees are down."

At least a dozen homes have trees on or against them, Kristian said, but "I'm sure that's only a small proportion."

One piece of good news, he said, was that he hadn't

SEE DAMAGE, 4A

have tree damage.

Utility crews restored water and power to the welcome center and beach club, Warren said.

BLUFFTON

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As people trickled back into Bluffton and power was slowly restored across some of the town, Mayor Lisa Sulka said at a Monday morning news conference that the barrier islands protected Bluffton from the worst of Matthew's wrath.

"This is a miracle that (we're) back in 48 hours," she said. "It should be a week from now, truly, that (people) should be allowed back in."

No calls from displaced families had come to her as of Monday early evening, she said.

The historic district was one of the hardest hit, Bluffton police Chief Joey Reynolds said at the same conference.

Reynolds also noted "a lot of water damage" at The Farm, Hampton Hall and Hampton Lake.

Trash pick-up and recycling will begin Wednesday.

"The town's in good shape," said Town Manager Marc Orlando. "We're in cleanup mode. I don't

think there's long-term damage."

BEAUFORT, PORT ROYAL AND ISLANDS

Repairs to the Harbor Bridge began Sunday and are still underway, Haley said Monday afternoon.

The storm washed out part of the causeway, preventing access to Fripp, Harbor and Hunting islands.

County Administrator Kubic reported a number of power restoration and debris removal crews on the ground on St. Helena Island.

"They were hit very, very hard with tree damage," he said. "The city of Beaufort is in pretty good shape."

In Beaufort, streets are no longer blocked off, Mayor Billy Keyserling said.

He said he knew of two homes damaged by trees within the city limits: one on Hermitage Road, the other on Mossy Oaks Road.

Power outages are prevalent north of the Broad

River. Keyserling is among those without power.

Congestion on the highways Sunday prevented additional utility crews from providing relief. Stuck in long lines of traffic, the crew spent the night in their trucks, Keyserling said.

In the town of Port Royal, Town Manager Van Willis identified these streets as some with the largest issues:

- Lenora Drive: Trees completely mangle power lines.

- 11th Street: Significant trees down.

- Old Shell Road: Completely inaccessible.

- The Sands Road: Storm surge undermined foundation.

More than 60 Beaufort Memorial Hospital patients who were transferred to facilities throughout the state returned Monday evening.

In a news release, the hospital also announced the following practices and clinics will reopen Tuesday:

- Beaufort Primary Care, Beaufort Medical Plaza.

- Harrison Peeples Health Care Center.

- Orthopedic Specialists, 1251 Ribaut Road, Dr. Kevin Jones.

- Laboratory, Beaufort Memorial Hospital and Beaufort Medical Plaza.

- Rehabilitation Services for adult orthopedics, 1251 Ribaut Road.

- Pediatric rehabilitation services, Beaufort Medical Plaza and Bluffton Medical Services at 7 Arley Way.

- Wound Care Center at Beaufort Medical Plaza.

- Imaging services, Beaufort Memorial Hospital and Beaufort Medical Plaza.

Patients scheduled for an outpatient service on Monday will be contacted by a hospital representative to reschedule. Remaining services and clinics are expected to reopen Wednesday.

Kelly Meyerhofer:
 843-706-8136,
 @KellyMeyerhofer

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TIM DOMINICK tdominick@thestate.com

A portion of Clarendon Road is washed out near where power crews are working to restore electricity. Beaufort County was hit hard by the storm.

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JAY KARR jkarr@islandpacket.com

A falling pine tree sliced through this home during Hurricane Matthew, which caused an “unprecedented amount of damage on Hilton Head Island,” Gov. Nikki Haley said in a news conference Monday. “Trees are down in a way we’ve never seen before.”

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TIM DOMINICK tdominick@thestate.com

Alan Johnson and his dad, Red, carry out items from a storeroom Monday where nearly 3 feet of storm surge drenched most of the items stored there. The home is in Tansi Village on Fig Island.

Title: **Days after hurricane, thousands in Beaufort County still without power**
 Author: BY LUCASHIGH lhigh@islandpacket.com
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Days after hurricane, thousands in Beaufort County still without power

BY LUCAS HIGH

lhigh@islandpacket.com

While water service has been restored to most of Beaufort County, tens of thousands of locals are still without power as Hurricane Matthew clean-up continues.

About 54,000 residents were still in the dark as of Monday afternoon, said Beaufort County administrator Gary Kubic. That's down from the roughly 73,000 locals who were without power through Sunday night, according to a Beaufort County news release.

"There are 501 electrical linemen within Beaufort County working to restore power and an additional 250 who are

expected to arrive today," the Monday morning release said.

- On Hilton Head Island, Palmetto Electric Cooperative president Berl

Davis said there are a few areas with power, but most of the island is still in the dark. It is possible that more residents may see their power restored as early as Tuesday. But, he said, "optimistically, we are looking at tomorrow afternoon or tomorrow night" for the majority of customers' power to be restored.

- In Bluffton, power is back in many neighborhoods. "Most of folks ... are restored," Davis said.
- The rest of the county

is a mixed bag. Beaufort County Sheriff P.J. Tanner said Monday afternoon that local leaders are "still waiting on a report (of the extent of outages in) northern Beaufort County." Beaufort Mayor Billy Keyserling added that outages are still prevalent north of the Broad River. He is among those without power. Congestion on the highways Sunday prevented additional utility crews from providing relief. Stuck in long lines of traffic, the crews spent Sunday night in their trucks, Keyserling said.

"Beaufort County was one of the hardest hit" areas in the state and restoring power to locals

"presents a unique challenge," said SCE&G spokesman Eric Boomerhower.

He said the company spent much of Sunday performing damage assessment, and the focus is now shifting toward restoration.

While Boomerhower could not say specifically where the manpower in Beaufort County will be focused, he did say, "We've got crews all over the place."

Davis said the company had 200 employees working in crews Monday to restore power to about 25,000 Beaufort County

SEE POWER, 4A

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POWER

customers. Typically only about 50 people are out working on power lines on a given day.

Palmetto Electric spokeswoman Missy Santorum said, "We are trying to be very timely, and we appreciate (customers') patience and understanding."

Gov. Nikki Haley said Monday afternoon that personnel with state agencies such as the S.C. Department of Transportation have shifted into "support mode for our counties" to help clear debris in advance of power crews.

"Cool and dry weather" in the coming days will assist recovery efforts, including power restoration, she said.

Along with the widespread power outages, Hilton Head Island has experienced some of the worst lingering water-related issues in the county.

Because the island, which is still not open to evacuees or visitors, is mostly without power, the sewer system is also down, Hilton Head Public Service District general

manager Pete Nardi said.

This means island residents who stayed in their homes must not flush toilets, he said.

On the bright side, "we have about 90 percent of the water system up and we are not aware of any contamination at this point," Nardi said.

When residents return and begin using water in their homes, customers will be advised to boil water used for drinking, cooking and washing dishes for the short term, he said.

Beaufort-Jasper Water

and Sewer Authority is asking residents to restrict water use to essential needs until power is restored throughout the two counties.

"Even though power has been restored to the BJWSA water treatment plants, the booster pump stations needed to distribute the water to all parts of our service area are without power and are being operated on generators," the utility said in a news release Sunday.

Lucas High: 843-706-8128,

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@IPBG_Lucas



TIM DOMINICK tdominick@thestate.com

Power crews work to
restore electricity on
Clarendon Road near
Seabrook.

Title: **Many residents of Sea Pines can't go home**
 Author: BY ERIN HEFFERNAN eheffernan@islandpacket.com
 Size: 116.71 column inches
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HILTON HEAD ISLAND

Many residents of Sea Pines can't go home

BY ERIN HEFFERNAN

eheffernan@islandpacket.com

Even if Hilton Head Island is opened to evacuees on Tuesday, many Sea Pines residents will still not be allowed to go to their houses, according to Community Services Associates President Bret Martin.

CSA, the company that manages the private community, will bar residents who live in sections that are still obstructed by trees from entering the neighborhood, Martin said. Those homes are mostly located in the southern end of the community.

Allowing their homeowners back may obstruct recovery crews, Martin explained Monday afternoon.

Hilton Head Mayor David Bennett announced Sunday that he hopes the island would be open for re-entry Tuesday.

Still Sea Pines security and CSA are strongly discouraging all Sea Pines residents from returning that soon because of the status of the neighborhood.

As of Monday afternoon:

- There is still no electricity or sewer service, and the water is not potable. There is a boil-water advisory in effect.

- Recovery crews have been unable to access whole sections of the neighborhood that are obstructed by trees, although the major roadways and both entrances have been cleared.

- Large trees are still falling in the aftermath of the storm throughout the neighborhood.

- Not all emergency services would be able to access obstructed parts of the community.

"We're trying to get Sea Pines cleaned up so that people can get back in safely, securely and with services available when they come here," Martin said. "We would love the property owners to get back as soon as possible, but we want them to be safe at the same time."

Because Sea Pines' roads are privately owned, CSA can prevent residents from returning, said Bob Bromage, spokesman for the Beaufort County Sheriff's Office.

Still, many residents are upset that they are unable to see the damage to their homes and are anxious to return now more than four days after Gov. Nikki Haley called them to evacuate.

"We just want to know if our house is okay," Sea Pines homeowner Heather Martin Guy said. "Even if we have to climb through downed trees to get there. Even if we can't stay there. We just want to see it, salvage what we can, begin recovery, and help our neighbors do the same."

Other residents plan to wait to attempt to come home.

"My husband and I are full-time residents of Sea Pines and anxious to see if there is any damage to our home but will not return until utilities have been restored," said Jani Stephenson. "We are very grateful for all the hard work of the first responders and want to stay clear for clean-up to continue."

Martin did not have an estimate Monday afternoon for when neighborhood problems would

be resolved.

CSA crews, private contractors and crews from Hilton Head Fire & Rescue and the South Island Public Service District are helping clear the neighborhood to restore access and services.

CSA is also seeking access to emergency funding from the Town of Hilton Head to help with recovery.

Sea Pines security officials said burglaries have been reported, though they have so far been limited to the areas that were accessible before security teams returned to the island. The only area they have seen that has been burglarized so far is the Sea Pines Center area, said Sea Pines director of security Toby McSwain.

Security will inform residents and business owners if they believe their property has been burglarized.

McSwain said residents should also prepare for the possibility of wildlife encounters when they return as some alligators and deer have been seen near homes.

Title: **Many residents of Sea Pines can't go home**
Author: BY ERIN HEFFERNAN eheffernan@islandpacket.com
Size: 116.71 column inches
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Erin Heffernan:
843-706-8142,
@IPBG_Erinh



DREW MARTIN Staff video

Standing water pools in the area of Heritage Farm, where Sea Pines residents have garden plots, in the wake of Hurricane Matthew on Sunday.

Title: **Poor communication about re-entry plan angers residents**
 Author: BY RICK BRUNDRETT rbrundrett@islandpacket.com
 Size: 73.62 column inches
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Poor communication about re-entry plan angers residents

■ Neither the governor's office nor the Beaufort County Sheriff's Office informed the public about the sheriff's re-entry screening plan after Gov. Nikki Haley lifted her evacuation order, causing mass confusion and anger.

BY RICK BRUNDRETT
 rbrundrett@islandpacket.com

When word surfaced early Sunday evening that Gov. Nikki Haley had lifted her evacuation order for Beaufort County, droves of displaced residents thought they were finally going home.

Then the harsh reality set in.

Despite the canceling of the governor's order, the Beaufort County Sheriff's Office was still enforcing its plan, announced earlier Sunday, to direct returning evacuees at checkpoints to two high schools serving the north and south sides of the county for a determination of whether their particular neighborhood was safe enough to return.

If not deemed safe, residents couldn't go home.

But neither the governor's office nor the Sheriff's Office clearly explained to the public then that the local screening process was still in effect, even

though the governor's order had been lifted.

That, in turn, caused mass confusion and anger among returning evacuees.

Haley at a news conference Monday addressed the situation in Beaufort County.

"We followed what Beaufort County wanted to do," she said in response to a reporter's question. "I know that they had their hiccups, and I know that they're dealing with that. I also know they're dealing with thousands of trees down and lots of issues."

As for the county's plan to offer shelters to returning evacuees until it was safe for them to go home, Haley said, "I don't think that actually worked very well," though she added that local officials have "readjusted, and from everything that I know, it's moving more smoothly."

The governor's evacuation order for Beaufort and Jasper counties, which took effect over Oct. 5 and 6, was formally lifted at 6:30 p.m. Sunday. Haley said at an earlier news conference Sunday that while she was lifting evacuation orders for Berkeley, Charleston, Colleton and Dorchester counties, her orders for Beaufort and Jasper counties would remain in effect, noting that "we are relying on the local governments and local law enforcement to tell us when they feel like it is safe."

The later written order lifting Beaufort County's evacuation makes no mention about the Beaufort County Sheriff's Office's plan to direct returning evacuees to two high schools for re-entry screening, though it says general-

SEE PLAN, 7A

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PLAN

ly that "nothing in this order prohibits local officials from establishing a curfew or restricting access to areas of danger."

A news release from the governor's office issued about 7:30 p.m. Sunday also didn't include any details about the re-entry screening plan. Neither

did a Facebook post about 8:20 p.m. from the South Carolina Emergency Management Division, which read only, "You may now return to Beaufort and Jasper Counties. Please be patient as you return to these areas."

The state emergency management office said in

an email Monday to The Island Packet and The Beaufort Gazette that Beaufort County Sheriff P.J. Tanner requested at 6:10 p.m. Sunday that the governor's evacuation order be lifted at 6:30 p.m. Sunday.

Sheriff's spokesman Capt. Bob Bromage ac-

knowledgeed Monday when contacted by the newspapers that his office could have better communicated with the public Sunday night.

"We do understand the frustration of the general public and are always working to improve our communications," he said,

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though he added, “The situation is very fluid. There are a lot of moving parts in this, and our priority is restoring Beaufort County.”

Bromage defended the re-entry screening plan, noting that after Hurricane Matthew had moved past the county, local officials wanted to “maintain some order to re-entry to the county.”

“There were a lot of people backed up for a considerable amount of time,” he said. “We’ve got utility crews still out there, and the traffic could pose a danger to what they’re doing.”

A Sheriff’s Office advisory issued to email subscribers at 9:12 p.m. Sunday — nearly three hours after Haley’s evacuation order for the county was lifted — said although the order had been canceled, there “are still many areas of Beaufort County deemed unsafe by local officials and will be restricted,” singling out Hilton Head, Harbor, Hunting and Frapp islands.

But as with the governor’s written order lifting

the evacuation, the advisory gave no details about the re-entry screening plan. Returning evacuees vented their frustration Sunday night on social media.

Here’s a sampling of comments Sunday night from The Island Packet’s and Bluffton Police Department’s Facebook pages about the breakdown in communications:

● **Laurel Parker Simon:** I hope to God there is never another reason to evacuate, but I sure hope officials are taking note of how to disseminate information more clearly next time.

● **Scott Wyland:** This going poorly in large part because of poor planning and next to no information dissemination.

Confusion also was evident at the local government level. In a Facebook comment Sunday afternoon, Bluffton town spokeswoman Debbie Szpanka advised town residents that when “re-entry is allowed, go to your house. You DON’T need to go to the school.”

At 9:19 a.m. Monday, the Sheriff’s Office wrote in an

advisory to email subscribers that the “outer checkpoints for entry into the county have been lifted,” and that county residents “can now return to their homes,” with the exception of those living in the Hilton Head and Harbor Island areas. The advisory also said the American Red Cross would provide post-storm shelters at Bluffton High School and Battery Creek High School.

Contacted Monday morning, state Rep. Shannon Erickson, R-Beaufort, told The Island Packet and The Beaufort Gazette there was a “disconnect from one piece to the next” in communication Sunday night between state and local officials, noting she received a slew of angry emails, texts and social media messages from constituents.

“I would have preferred to have seen a joint press release from the governor’s office and our Beaufort County Emergency Operations Center for clarification,” she said.

State Sen. Tom Davis, R-Beaufort, took to Facebook on Sunday night and

Monday morning to clarify the governor’s order lifting the evacuation and the re-entry screening plan by the Sheriff’s Office. He said before posting, he confirmed his information with state and county officials.

Davis said while he believes the Sheriff’s Office overall has “done a tremendous job over the last 48 hours” responding to problems caused by the hurricane, there is a “lesson to be taken away” regarding communication with the public.

“People get their information in very different ways now than they historically have,” Davis said, citing social media as an example. “With a crisis like this, it’s important to get information out accurately and quickly in as many ways possible.”

Projects reporter Kelly Meyerhofer and social media editor Graham Cawthon, as well as Jamie Self, a reporter for The State, contributed to this story.

*Rick Brundrett:
843-706-8114,
@RickBrundrett*

Title: **MANY RETURN TO HOMES, BUT NOT TO NORMALCY**
 Author: BY STEPHEN FASTENAU,
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HURRICANE MATTHEW RECOVERY

MANY RETURN TO HOMES, BUT NOT TO NORMALCY

Officials cite roads, bridges

BY STEPHEN FASTENAU, WADE
LIVINGSTON AND TERESA MOSS

sfastenau@beaufortgazette.com,
wlivingston@islandpacket.com,
tmoss@islandpacket.com

Most evacuation-weary Beaufort Countians were allowed to return to their homes Monday, free of the checkpoints and traffic jams that hampered re-entry a day earlier in Hurricane Matthew's aftermath.

But the wait continued for those hoping to reach Hilton Head, Harbor and Frapp islands, where county officials deemed the roads too debris-strewn or structurally unsafe.

The causeways on either side of the Harbor River bridge have been undermined and are among the roadways the S.C. Department of Transportation is working to repair. Until they are fixed, no one will be allowed to pass to reach Harbor, Hunting or Frapp islands, according to Beaufort County Emergency Management Division commander Neil Baxley.

Evacuees also were turned

away on one of the bridges to Hilton Head, despite some progress toward preparing for their return. Hilton Head Hospital reopened at about noon. Public roads have been cleared, town manager Steve Riley said Monday afternoon, and about 500 commercial buildings have been inspected, with 440 undamaged.

Mayor David Bennett hopes to have the town suitable for re-entry by Tuesday, Riley noted.

"We are going to try and hit that, but at this point in time I can't say," Riley said, explaining roads in many of the island's gated communities are still too cluttered for safe passage. Managers there are worried homeowners, unable to reach their properties, will park and walk in, thereby blocking access for utility vehicles.

So for now, only those with a preapproved Beaufort County re-entry pass will be admitted, according to Bromage, adding that contractors helping with cleanup could also pass through the checkpoint. He said he did not know how many meeting that description had been allowed through checkpoints Monday. In one 10-minute span Monday evening, 17 vehicles were turned away at the bridge to Hilton Head Island, while 13 were allowed to pass.

Red Cross shelters have been set up to accommodate those not allowed to return — at Battery Creek High School in northern Beaufort County and at Bluffton High School in southern Beaufort County. People on Hilton Head who did not evacuate can also go to a shelter at

➔ MORE INSIDE

- Were any Sea Pines' landmarks damaged in the hurricane? **2A**
- Even if Hilton Head is opened to evacuees, some Sea Pines residents won't be allowed to return. **2A**
- About 54,000 Beaufort County residents were still without power Monday. **3A**
- Beaufort County schools are closed until at least Thursday. **4A**

➔ ONLINE

Go to beaufortgazette.com and islandpacket.com for updates, aerial photos, videos and more on Hurricane Matthew.

SEE EVACUEES, 7A

FROM PAGE 1A

EVACUEES

the Hilton Head schools complex on Wilborn Road.

At Battery Creek High early Monday, Beaufort County Sheriff's Office deputies set up in a vend-

ing machine room near the gymnasium, where one person tried to sleep on one of the several cots placed there.

Hundreds more eva-

cuees were to arrive by bus from Jasper County. An earlier wave from a Jasper County shelter arrived at Battery Creek by Palmetto Breeze bus.

Many waited there on another bus ride to take them home.

Among them was Joe Pinckney, 80, who lives on Sams Point Road. He had

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been at the Ridgeland shelter since Thursday — first in the school's gymnasium, then moving to a hallway during the worst of the storm. People were packed together, he said, either sitting in the floor or in chairs.

Also at the shelter trying to get home to St. Helena Island was Sharon Brown, who arrived at Battery Creek by bus Sunday night. Brown's family had evacuated to Atlanta. Her sister had been evacuated from a nursing home to Ridgeland, Brown said.

She was waiting to hear from her family before deciding whether to go home.

"I don't know how I'm going to get in touch with them," she said.

As at Battery Creek, the Red Cross provided shelter, food, water and bathrooms at Bluffton High School. Even those who were not registering to stay at the shelter — many slept outside in their cars, a volunteer said — could duck in for water or a meal.

Many of the 100 people there had sat for hours on

the side of the road Sunday trying to enter Beaufort County after Gov. Nikki Haley lifted an evacuation order.

HILTON HEAD

Some tried on Monday to reach Hilton Head, only to be turned away.

Chanel Cohen was among them. She cradled her son in a blanket outside and explained how her family left Hilton Head Island for Atlanta on Wednesday. They were stuck for about seven hours in the traffic jam re-entering the county Sunday, she said.

"We are just ready to go home," Cohen said. "They won't let us go to Hilton Head."

Vicki Oliveira missed Sunday's traffic jam but was met with frustration Monday.

The Hilton Head Hospital employee wanted to get to the island to help get the hospital running again. Nonetheless, officers at the Hilton Head bridge turned her back, saying she needed to get a pass from the shelter. When she arrived at the

shelter, she was told the shelter was not providing passes to get on the island.

"We are going to try again," Oliveira said. "I know they are wanting to get the hospital open by noon, and if I can get there to help — I will help."

At about that time, 15 miles away, approximately 40 cars made it over the first bridge to Hilton Head, only to get turned around at the foot of the bridge, at the entrance to Pinckney National Wildlife Refuge. Although the traffic extended about halfway up the bridge, most waited no more than 10 minutes to get rerouted. Motorist seemed patient with deputies and troopers, who were polite in return.

A man in a white Toyota Rav 4 showed a green-colored pass, which deputies and troopers believed to have been falsified. He was directed to turn around, and a trooper took down his information and sent him away.

Hilton Head resident Billy Martini sat in his

truck on the bridge around 11 a.m. In the passenger seat was a chainsaw.

Martini, a construction worker and member of a local band, hoped that chain saw might be his ticket to getting home. He'd evacuated Wednesday to Chapin, and he said he wanted to help with the cleanup efforts. He'd seen a picture of his apartment complex, Tabby Walk. A tree had fallen on the building that housed his unit, he said, but he had no idea about the shape of his home.

He said re-entry was confusing because of conflicting information online from various agencies. He was caught in Sunday's bottleneck at the county line on U.S. 278, before finally being allowed through around 6:45 p.m.

"It's chaos right now," he said. "But that's to be expected. It's a hurricane — they don't happen that often."

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DAVID GOLDMAN AP

Displaced residents walk into a shelter Sunday in Bluffton. Red Cross shelters are housing some of those not allowed to return home.

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REBECCA LURYE rlurye@islandpacket.com

Cars line up Monday at the Hilton Head Island checkpoint. Some evacuees may be able to go home Tuesday.

Title: **USC football game**

Author:

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USC football game

(R)ather than moving Saturday night's scheduled game against Georgia at Williams-Brice Stadium to Atlanta, as some proposed, USC officials decided merely to delay it until Sunday afternoon.

The impulse to avoid giving up a home game for the second straight season — and the millions in revenue it brings to the school — is understandable.

However, the choice to keep the game in Columbia, albeit kicking off 19 hours later than initially planned, is irresponsible.

Yes, college football is a big deal in our state. But so is a state of emergency due to a weather crisis. ...

Gov. Nikki Haley has rightly signaled frustration over USC's dubious call to play that game this weekend despite the hurricane. As she pointed out Thursday, law enforcement personnel must focus on their demanding — and critical — storm-related duties, not on providing traffic and security services at a sporting event that could draw more than 80,000 fans.

— *Post & Courier*
 Charleston