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Subject: 10.23.15 Media Monitoring Afternoon Report for DR-4241-SC

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FYSA-10.23.15 Media Monitoring Afternoon Report for DR-4241-SC

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## *NEWS CLIPS*

SOUTH CAROLINA-DR-4241

10/23/1

Afternoon

### **Issues:**

- None.

### **Summary:**

- SNAP/food stamp program approved for individuals in 20 affected counties, starting today
- Publication that covers state government quotes SC United Way officials saying “the FEMA that was around 10 years ago after Hurricane Katrina is now smaller and underfunded. ...What we’ve got now is a tightly-controlled group designed to deny more claims than approve them.”
- Coverage of the six additional counties approved for PA reached as far as Georgia
- As of Thursday, "SCDOT says it is 72 percent done in completing road and bridge repairs.
- Dorchester County has at least \$23.5 million in damage -- \$4.5 million for county infrastructure and \$19 million for homes.
- More than 20,000 cubic yards of debris have been moved, not counting what municipalities have picked up separately
- Kingtree News: “What to do if FEMA says you are ineligible”
- A locally owned weekly, Columbia Star, quotes a state hazard mitigation office employee explaining FEMA’s IHP, ONA, PA and hazard mitigation programs; FEMA External Affairs specialist is also quoted saying DRC’s will remain open indefinitely and how survivors should stay in contact with FEMA to continue to press for appropriate funding.
- State senator is holding a flood recovery Q&A Tuesday at Manning High School
- Baptist Press reports it has volunteers from 15 states responding to aid flood survivors in SC

### **Analysis:**

- Several references in today’s stories about how survivors should press FEMA for favorable decisions on financial aid, and not settle for early determinations of ineligibility.

### **Social Listening Analysis:**

- FEMA. Discussions about FEMA and South Carolina continue at a low level, with a few mentions of the need to address needs in rural, isolated areas. This is not a large share of the overall flood-related conversations at this time.
- Community recovery. The bulk of the discussions online regarding South Carolina flooding continue to take place on [community pages dedicated to sharing detailed recovery information](#) and [coordination of volunteer resources](#). There is a focus on both [identifying families](#) who need help [restoring livable conditions](#) and long

term recovery efforts involving contractors and rebuilding. Discussions continue amongst community members on the overall recovery process, and most of the posts on the recovery groups are positive.

- Official response updates. Volunteer organizations, officials, and agencies are continuing to share [photos](#) and [updates](#) of their work responding to the effects of flooding. These posts account for a large portion of the conversations outside of the community recovery discussions. There were several mentions and some discussions of the [SC VOAD meeting](#) for volunteer group coordination that took place yesterday and the activation of the [SC VOAD website](#) and social media accounts.
- Disaster posts. South Carolina flood-related discussions are less focused, but there is a lot of activity on all platforms. Government agencies and disaster organizations are sharing updates on available resources, [safety updates](#) and community meetings, local businesses and volunteers are organizing to [help survivors with their unmet needs](#) and transitional housing, as well as fundraisers and [donation drives](#), many recovery groups are [sharing pictures of their work](#).

Have a look at some of the twitter conversations on this [Twitter search](#).

## Floods

[Residents who lost property or income in South Carolina flooding can get food assistance](#)

[Residents impacted by floodwaters can get food assistance](#)

[Aiken County Now Eligible For Federal Flooding Assistance](#)

[NEWS: Flood recovery will take months](#)

[By the numbers: The Great Flood](#)

[County officials estimate \\$23.5M in flood damage](#)

[SCDOT: long-term road, bridge repairs in full swing throughout state](#)

[State, federal officials and non-profits to join Haley and Team SC on Monday](#)

[What to do if FEMA says you are ineligible](#)

[Officer for FEMA presents procedures for flood victims at Columbia City Council meeting](#)

[Myrtle Beach Safari animals make the most of the flooding](#)

[Editorial: Richland 1 right to make up lost school days; other districts should too](#)

[Johnson to hold Town Hall Tuesday for Q&A on flood relief](#)

[Cayce city officials reopen some parks closed following floods](#)

[Mall offering free space to flood-damaged businesses](#)

[MEMA sends another worker to help with South Carolina recovery efforts](#)

[Volunteers from 15 states responding in S.C.](#)

[Helping neighbors to rebuild and recover](#)

[ASPCA Mega Match-A-Thon Underway Across Lowcountry](#)

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## Floods

### [Residents who lost property or income in South Carolina flooding can get food assistance](#)

[The Associated Press](#)

October 23, 2015

COLUMBIA, South Carolina — South Carolina residents who lost property or income due to this month's historic flooding are eligible for temporary food assistance.

The state Department of Social Services announced Friday that people living in 20 counties affected by the disaster can apply for debit-like cards that can be used to buy food at grocery stores and other retailers.

People can apply beginning Tuesday through Dec. 3.

Applicants must show they suffered unreimbursed losses in the disaster, such as damage or destruction to their home or lost wages.

People in certain ZIP codes within the counties who already receive help through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program will automatically get money added to their cards. Others will have to request a supplement.

## Residents impacted by floodwaters can get food assistance

[Greenwood Index Journal](#), October 23, 2015

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## Aiken County Now Eligible For Federal Flooding Assistance

By Cynthia Otero

[WJBF ABC News Channel 6](#), Augusta, Ga., October 23, 2015

Columbia, SC – Public Assistance has been approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for six additional South Carolina counties to help them recover from October's severe flooding.

This assistance from FEMA enables state agencies, local governments and certain private non-profits to recoup costs for storm response, debris removal, and infrastructure damage.

Four counties, not previously eligible for FEMA Public Assistance, have now been approved for all categories: Aiken, Calhoun, Dillon and Greenwood Counties. Also, Charleston and Lexington Counties are now eligible for all categories of the FEMA Public Assistance program; before now, these two counties were only eligible for debris removal and emergency protective measures.

The FEMA Public Assistance program categories are as follows:

Category A: Debris Removal

Category B: Emergency Protective Measures

Category C: Roads and Bridges

Category D: Water Control Facilities

Category E: Buildings and Equipment

Category F: Utilities

Category G: Parks, Recreational Facilities and Other Items

The FEMA Public Assistance program is a reimbursement grant program. Typically, the federal share is 75 percent and the state or local governments pay the remaining 25 percent whereas eligible private non-profit groups are responsible for the full 25 percent.

Beyond FEMA's Public Assistance program, FEMA also provides Individual Assistance, which is direct aid to residents who've been severely affected by severe storms and flooding in South Carolina. Flood survivors in Bamberg, Berkeley, Calhoun, Charleston, Clarendon, Colleton, Darlington, Dorchester, Fairfield, Florence, Georgetown, Greenwood, Horry, Kershaw, Lee, Lexington, Marion, Newberry, Orangeburg, Richland, Sumter and Williamsburg Counties can register with FEMA the following ways:

Apply online

Apply via smartphone

Residents may call the registration phone number at 1-800-621-FEMA (1-800-621-3362); those who have a speech disability or hearing loss and use TTY, should call 1-800-462-7585 directly; for those who use 711 or Video Relay Service (VRS), call 1-800-621-3362.

## NEWS: Flood recovery will take months

[Statehouse Report](#), 10/23/2015

By Andy Brack, editor and publisher

Thousands of South Carolina families will have a far different holiday season from usual thanks to October floods that inundated a swath of the state from the Midlands through the Pee Dee and Lowcountry.

As of this morning, only one river — the Waccamaw near Conway— was above flood stage some three weeks after trillions of gallons fell on the Carolinas over three days. S.C. Emergency Management Division spokesman Derrec Becker said the Santee fell out of flood stage Thursday night and the Waccamaw is expected to return to normal levels soon.

Meanwhile for thousands, the recovery continues with some families facing what state Sen. Ronnie Sabb, D-

Williamsburg, calls a “new normal,” especially during Thanksgiving and Christmas.

“Unfortunately, there are likely to be situations where folks don’t have the opportunity to enjoy their homes — their normal environment for the family during that special time of year,” he said. “There will be a new normal for a number of our citizens and residents.”

Kevin Shwedo, the state’s Department of Motor Vehicles executive director who was named disaster recovery czar by Gov. Nikki Haley on Monday, said he didn’t believe every South Carolinian impacted by the disaster would be in a permanent home by Christmas, two months from now. It could be at least six months — or more — before recovery efforts conclude, he said.

“The best thing we can do as a community is to get our arms around those people who may not be in their permanent housing and give them the Christmas they deserve,” he said. “We can do that as a community.”

Lots of people need help

Across South Carolina, people who were flooded out of their homes are living with family members, friends and neighbors, or they have found a place to rent in an apartment, home or motel. Some, such as people whose homes were on slabs near the Black River in Kingstree, never will return because rules will require them to be elevated at prohibitive costs. For others, it will take months to rip away moldy debris and repair it or build something new. Yet others without flood insurance in places where flooding was never expected, such as in Forest Acres in the Midlands, will have tough choices of whether to get loans to rebuild while paying existing mortgages or to come up with some other solution.

“The construction industry is going to be really good for the next six months,” said Tim Ervolina, president and CEO of the United Way Association of South Carolina.

The association, which operates the state’s 2-1-1 helpline, is being swamped with calls from people wanting help to find a meal or a place to stay. In September, the month before the flood, it received about 20,000 calls. Already this month, it has far exceeded that number. Ervolina said he expected his staff would field 40,000 to 50,000 calls for help by the end of the month — one of the few indicators available now of how many people are hurting.

“We already had an affordable housing crisis in this state before the storm,” Ervolina said. “When you think about the affordable housing units we lost, that makes the inventory of affordable housing worse.”

Disaster recovery officials say they’re still gathering data to determine the devastation to the state and should have more numbers soon.

“We’ve got to tap every available resource we can to see what and how we can help,” Sabb said of state and federal efforts.

Damage permeates Williamsburg County

In rural Williamsburg County, former newspaper editor Linda W. Brown of Kingstree shares that life has changed for many who might not have flood damage.

The county library, for example, will be closed for two months.

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“There was two feet of water throughout the building,” she said. “The insurance adjuster is insisting that the books have to remain in the library while the carpet and baseboards are replaced. ServPro is having to work around enough boxed books to fill a large U-Haul truck.”

James Dukes, who lives on a family farm in the Bloomingville community between Kingstree and Andrews, relates that peanuts, cotton and soybeans have been ruined throughout agricultural areas impacted by flooding. And this comes after a drought wiped out much of the corn crop, he added. Officials have estimated crop losses total more than \$300 million across the state.

“I’ve heard older folks say they’ve never seen anything like this,” Dukes said. “It’s worse than Hurricane Hugo. A lot of these houses need to be gutted out and aired out. It’s going to be quite some time before some people get into their homes.”

If in doubt, register with FEMA

Shwedo, the new disaster recovery chief, urged residents impacted in any way by the flood to register with the Federal Emergency Management Agency to ensure that they could get help down the road if something like mold developed in the weeks ahead.

“We’ve got a lot of people who have started the enrollment piece with FEMA, but that’s going to end quickly,” he said. “If you’re not enrolled, the bureaucracy is going to kill you.

“We have to get everybody who is even remotely touched registered. If in doubt, register. But if you get lazy [and don’t register] and all of a sudden find mold, there’s nothing anybody can be able to do.”

FEMA currently has 23 disaster recovery centers throughout the state where people can file for help. [Click here to find the one nearest you.](#)

Shwedo also urged residents who are interacting with FEMA, which has approved more than \$45 million so far in direct aid, to be tough and challenge any claims that are denied.

The first inclination to everyone has got to be rebut it — immediately rebut it because a lot of the people rebutting it are getting money,” he said. “Persistence is going to save a lot of people in this state. None of us should accept no.”

Ervolina agreed, noting that the FEMA that was around 10 years ago after Hurricane Katrina is now smaller and underfunded.

“What we’ve got now is a tightly-controlled group designed to deny more claims than approve them,” he said.

Because FEMA grants generally are limited to \$32,000 and loans to \$200,000 for those who qualify, people eventually are going to wake up and feel they’ve been slapped across the face with a dead fish, he said. And that’s because FEMA has suffered as federal leaders pushed to shrink government.

“The consequences of that for South Carolina is that the uninsured losses are going to be staggering,” Ervolina predicted, adding that a special supplemental appropriation by Congress could help ameliorate a big part of the crisis.

Most of South Carolina’s U.S. congressmen and both U.S. senators voted against a similar measure to help Hurricane Sandy victims in the Northeast.

“I hope they don’t hold that against us when the time comes,” Ervolina said.

Andy Brack is editor and publisher of Statehouse Report. Have a comment? Send to: [feedback@statehousereport.com](mailto:feedback@statehousereport.com).

## By the numbers: The Great Flood

[Statehouse Report](#), 10/23/2015

Here is a look at the impact of the flood based on available data as of Oct. 23, 2015:

Meals served through Oct. 22: 1,506,973 by these four agencies:

Harvest Hope Food Bank, 1,154,518 meals

Lowcountry Food Bank: 328,558 meals

American Red Cross: 70,759 meals; 75,866 snacks

Salvation Army: 53,138 meals; 48,921 drinks; 41,658 snacks

Number of nonprofit emergency response vehicles: 45 each by American Red Cross and Salvation Army

Overnight stays via the American Red Cross: 4,748

People receiving emotional and spiritual care from Salvation Army: 2,254

Bridges still closed across S.C.: 37

Roads closed: 103 roads

Number of FEMA Disaster Recovery Centers: 23 across the state. Find a center near you.

Dollars approved by FEMA for individuals and households: \$45,236,497.29 from 14,541 applications. Numbers are updated here.

Calls for help via 2-1-1: More than 20,000 this month; At least 40,000 calls expected by the end of the month — twice the usual amount.

Rivers still at flood stage: 1, the Waccamaw.

Number of National Guard members on recovery duty: 1,300. They are working in security and relief capacities. At the peak of disaster response, about 4,000 guardsmen were on special duty.

Shelters open: 1, Trinity Baptist Church, Cayce. As people have found lodging, dozens of shelters have been closed.

Cubic yards of debris removed since Oct. 12: 20,673 in 430 truckloads, according to S.C. Department of Transportation figures. Note: The figures may not include debris removed by municipalities.

SOURCES: S.C. Emergency Management Division, United Way Association of South Carolina.

## County officials estimate \$23.5M in flood damage

Jenna-Ley Harrison

[Summerville Journal Scene](#), October 22, 2015

Dorchester County suffered a hard hit from this month’s flooding, producing what county officials have estimated to be at least \$23.5 million in damage.

That total breaks down to \$4.5 million for county infrastructure and \$19 million for homes, according to Emergency Management Director Mario Formisano.

Neighborhoods that endured some of the costliest devastation included Arbor Oaks, Tranquil Estates, Ashborough, Legend Oaks and homes in Givhans and Ridgeville.

While county officials haven’t gone so far as to characterize the flood damage as unprecedented, they did describe it as one of the top disasters in Dorchester’s history.

"It's one of the worst," Formisano said.

Council voted Monday to approve transferring \$40,000 from the county contingency fund, known as the rainy day fund, to the county disaster fund to cover flood-related costs.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is also providing assistance to any resident who applies at [disasterassistance.gov](http://disasterassistance.gov).

Individual premiums and percentages for local flood impacts can be found at [floodsmart.gov](http://floodsmart.gov), the site for the National Flood Insurance Program.

Residents in Dorchester County have comprised nearly 2,300 of the FEMA registrations made so far, according to agency officials.

At least 58,600 total registrations have been made in South Carolina, including 10,000-plus in the tri-county alone.

The deadline to register for federal assistance is Dec. 4. But residents don't have to wait until first registering with an individual insurance company, said FEMA spokesman William C. Lindsey.

"Any damage we want you to register," he said. That includes minor water damage and small roof leaks.

Lindsey said Disaster Recovery Centers (DRC) across the state have also been sending out mitigation staff to inspect and evaluate residential communities. As of Wednesday, total inspections surpassed 46,000.

"FEMA is here as long as there is a need. Recovery is an individual process," Lindsey said.

Inspectors were already out in Berkeley County this week and will soon be trickling into Dorchester County.

There are 22 centers currently open in South Carolina, including local ones at Seacoast Church at 301 E. 5th N. Street in Summerville and Charleston County Public Works in North Charleston. As a whole, the centers have seen an average daily activity of well over 5,000 people, Lindsey said, and will remain open 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily until further notice.

In addition, FEMA's individual housing program has already approved more than \$37 million in financial assistance across the state and more than \$4.5 million in other needs assistance programs, Lindsey said.

Total FEMA residential registrations filed for FEMA assistance by county, as of Wednesday:

Dorchester: 2,246

Berkeley: 2,906

Charleston: 5,537

Colleton: 376

Orangeburg: 3,834

Compiled by Jenna-Ley Harrison/Journal Scene

Source: FEMA External Affairs Office

## **SCDOT: long-term road, bridge repairs in full swing throughout state**

By Chad Mills

[WIS TV](#) 10, Columbia NBC, Oct. 22, 2015

COLUMBIA, SC (WIS) - Driving around the Midlands has gotten tougher for Leonard Giles. Luckily for him, the man who volunteers to help his neighbors has a cool head and a strategy.

"It's been kind of hard to get through, but if you just, you know, leave early and know where you're going and call all your friends, and they'll tell you what's open and what's closed," Giles said, "and you know, you go like that, that's the best, you know, thing to do instead of being frustrated. Never go around the barricades."

As Giles helped clean up a home off Fairfield Road, crews from the South Carolina Department of Transportation worked on it.

"There's a massive force out," Giles said. "I've seen more dump trucks than I have in a long time, and they're getting the job done. I want to commend them for fixing the roads. They're getting the job done."

Although part of Fairfield Road was still blocked, it likely won't remain that way for too long. On Thursday, SCDOT Secretary Christy Hall told commissioners the road and bridge repair effort is in full swing.

The number of closed roads across the state is down from a peak 541 roads to 153.

"At this point, we are 72% toward completing the repair work," SCDOT spokesman Pete Poore said.

In the meeting, DOT officials told commissioners that 130 crews are working the recovery, and that's not counting the 20 contractors brought in to help. They're focusing on the 15 primary roads that still have closures before fixing problems on secondary roads, including Fairfield Road.

"321 is a mess," Giles said. "I travel it a lot, but I don't live out there, and I imagine they are upset, because they have to go around, so that's more gas."

Officials, however, believe it should be back open by the end of this month. SCDOT has estimated completion dates on all of the other road closures as well.



[Click here to see the full list.](#)

## **State, federal officials and non-profits to join Haley and Team SC on Monday**

by Robert Joseph Baker

[Manning Times](#)/Manning Live, October 23, 2015

Similar story on [WLTX](#) 19, Columbia

COLUMBIA – Governor Nikki Haley will host a Team South Carolina flood relief event from noon to 4 p.m. Monday at the Clarendon County Community Center, the old high school gymnasium behind Weldon Auditorium.

For those impacted by flooding in counties across the state, Team South Carolina events serve as one-stops where residents can find out about resources available to families and businesses as South Carolina recovers. Team South Carolina events bring together representatives from state and federal agencies and non-profit organizations to assist those in need in the wake of statewide flooding.

At Team South Carolina Day in Clarendon County residents can:

Register for financial assistance from FEMA

Apply for disaster loans from the U.S. Small Business Administration

Learn more about repairing and flood proofing their home from FEMA

Get information about assistance for farmers with crop losses or damage from the U.S. Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency

Apply for unemployment benefits from the S.C. Department of Employment and Workforce

Apply for food and financial assistance from the S.C. Department of Social Services

Get information about mental health and other healthcare services from the S.C. Department of Mental Health and the S.C. Department of Health and Human Services

Get help with insurance claims from the S.C. Department of Insurance

Receive a free kit to test well water from the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control

Receive a free tetanus shot from the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control

## **What to do if FEMA says you are ineligible**

[Kingstree News](#)

Thursday, October 22, 2015

Williamsburg County Government officials are advising citizens affected by the severe storms, and flooding may receive a letter from the Federal Emergency Management Agency saying they are ineligible for disaster assistance. If this happens, do not be alarmed or discouraged. It may mean that FEMA does not have all the information needed to make a decision regarding an applicant's disaster assistance. Several reasons exist for why flood survivors receive ineligibility determination letters and yet may be eligible for assistance. For example, the applicant may still need to: Return insurance information; Provide information to prove occupancy or ownership of the damaged property; Fill out all necessary paperwork; or Complete and return the U.S. Small Business Administration loan application. Applicants with insurance should contact their insurance company and ask for a settlement letter detailing exactly what is covered under their claim. They should mail insurance settlement information to FEMA – Individuals and Households Program, National Processing Service Center, P.O. Box 10055, Hyattsville, MD 20782-7055. Flood survivors have up to 12 months from the date they registered with FEMA to submit insurance information for review. FEMA cannot provide money to individuals or households for losses already covered by insurance. FEMA reminds applicants to return the completed SBA loan application even if they choose to decline the loan. Completing the loan application is a necessary step if applicants are to be considered for some other forms of disaster assistance. Applicants who wish to appeal a decision may do so in writing within 60 days from the date the ineligibility letter was received. Guidelines for appeals can be found in the Applicant's Handbook sent to everyone who registered with FEMA. Flood survivors who need to update their application information or have any questions about disaster assistance can call the FEMA helpline at 800-621-3362. Phone lines are open from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m., seven days a week until further notice. People can apply for FEMA assistance online at [www.DisasterAssistance.gov](http://www.DisasterAssistance.gov). They can call 800-621-3362 toll free from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily until further notice. Multilingual operators are available. Disaster survivors who are deaf, hard of hearing or have a speech disability and use a TTY, call 800-462-7585. If survivors use 711 or VRS (Video Relay Service) or require accommodations while visiting a center, call 800-621-3362. All disaster recovery centers are accessible and equipped with tools to accommodate survivors who need disability-related communication aids. Survivors can visit a state/FEMA disaster recovery center. To find the nearest DRC go to <http://asd.fema.gov/inter/locator/home.htm>.

## **Officer for FEMA presents procedures for flood victims at Columbia City Council**

## meeting

By Josh Cruse

[Columbia Star](#), Oct. 23, 2014

Columbia City Council recognized two important initiatives at the monthly meeting Tuesday, October 20.

Mayor Steve Benjamin proclaimed October 15, 2015, as National Pregnancy and Infant Loss Remembrance Day. According to the proclamation, nearly one in four women have experienced the loss of a baby in pregnancy.

Benjamin also proclaimed October 2015 as Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

In other news, Katie Norr is, with the State Hazard Mitigation Office, presented the options available for both individuals and government entities affected by the flood waters. There are three types of programs available: individual assistance, public assistance, and hazard mitigation.

The Individual Household program is the assistance the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) provides for individuals to help them get back to a safe and sanitary living environment. Individuals will apply directly to FEMA for the assistance. There are two types of assistance for individuals: housing assistance and other needs assistance. Housing assistance deals with temporary housing and temporary financial assistance until other living arrangements can be made. Other needs assistance deals with losses, such as furniture, that are associated with a disastrous event.

Norris says the first option residents should choose is insurance. Residents can also file for FEMA assistance, after handling the insurance process. If residents still need assistance, they can apply for small business administration loans and call 211 for any unmet needs. Norris says the last step residents should take is to contact local government to discuss mitigation.

The Public Assistance Program is for state and local governments for fixing roads or repairing damage to public buildings and schools.

Local governments should coordinate with FEMA, connect with affected citizens, fill out the grant pre-application, and complete the full grant application for FEMA submission.

As for the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, the funds come from FEMA, through the state government, to local governments. The funds are tied to the total federal share of the disaster cost. The program will cover 15 percent of the total federal disaster cost; although, Norris says, it is extremely hard to estimate.

The funds are only dispersed to the units of government; individuals cannot apply directly for those funds. However, Norris says they can benefit from them.

Norris also reviewed the timeline of events. The disaster declaration was made on October 5. Then sub-applicants, such as the City of Columbia, would complete a pre-application. The South Carolina Emergency Medical Division (SCEMD) would identify the projects in need of further development.

Norris says, most often there are more projects than funds. FEMA will review the projects and decide which projects can be funded.

SCEMD will receive estimates, and FEMA will begin funding projects. Norris says the application review process does take some time to complete. She also says all funding totals are not complete until one year after the disaster.

Dan Shulman, the external affairs specialist for FEMA, said disaster recovery centers are still available and will remain open as long as they are needed.

Shulman also encourages residents who receive FEMA assistance to remain in contact until the issue is resolved. Even after they receive a letter from FEMA regarding the amount of funds they receive, residents should contact FEMA if the amount is not right or it is not enough. According to Shulman, if residents stop calling, FEMA will assume any issue has been resolved.

The next Columbia City Council meeting will be held Tuesday, November 10 at 1737 Main Street beginning at 6:00 p.m. *(Some less relevant material was deleted for space)*

## Myrtle Beach Safari animals make the most of the flooding

[WMBF NBC Myrtle Beach-Florence](#), Oct 23, 2015

MYRTLE BEACH, SC (WMBF) – While the flooding in South Carolina this month was devastating and has done untold amounts of property damage, the Myrtle Beach Safari took the opportunity to let their animals get their paws wet and have a little fun.

A video posted to the Myrtle Beach Safari YouTube page begins with the message: “While we prepare for the inevitable epic clean-up, we take a moment to realize how much worse things could have been and that, even in this time of difficult, we should make the most out of each and every day.

In the video posted on October 5, one of the preserve’s chimpanzees went out on the water on a surfboard, holding on to a handler as he paddles through a flooded street.



“Elsewhere on the Preserve, the tigers take advantage of the wet weather to participate in their favorite pastime, chasing the ‘mop-e-lope’.”

The video then shows slow-motion footage of the preserve’s large cats chasing the “mop-e-lope” into large puddles at the T.I.G.E.R.S. preserve.

The video closes with this message: “We wish all our friends and neighbors affected by the flood all the best in the days and weeks to come. We hope this video has brought a little bit of sunshine into your gloomy day.”

Click here to watch this video and other Myrtle Beach Safari videos on YouTube.

Learn more about the Myrtle Beach Safari here: <http://www.myrtlebeachsafari.com/>

## **Editorial: Richland 1 right to make up lost school days; other districts should too**

[The State](#) (Columbia), Oct. 23, 2015

State law allows school boards to shorten the school year by up to 3 days when school has to be cancelled

Richland 1 voted unanimously to make up all 7 days missed to flood; others should do likewise

The floods didn’t diminish students’ right to the 180 days of class time that state law promises them

Columbia, SC -- THREE HEARTY cheers to the Richland District 1 school board, for refusing to cheat students out of the flooded-out class time they deserve.

Other school districts that had to close as a result of the largest rainfall in the state’s recorded history need to likewise provide their students with the 180 days of class time that state law promises them every year. And our legislators need to resist the temptation to override the Richland 1 board’s responsible, and unanimous, decision to require students to make up all seven days that they missed when the floods forced the schools to close earlier this month.

Richland 1 approves making up all days missed to flooding

The Richland 1 decision is all the more impressive because this is the first time school districts have had the authority to “forgive” missed days. In the past, they had to ask their local legislators to pass special laws doing this — and asking was about all they had to do, because legislators were more than happy to steal class time from students. In fact, it wasn’t unheard of for local legislators to pass a single-district law shortening the school year even after the school board already had scheduled the make-up days.

Under a new law that took effect in May, school boards have to use all three of their make-up days if three days of classes are canceled. After that, they can waive up to three days of missed classes, and then they can ask the State Board of Education for permission to waive an additional three days.

Locally, Lexington 3 and 4 plan to make up the two days they missed. But while Richland 2 plans to make up four days, it hasn’t decided about the fifth; Lexington-Richland District 5 hasn’t decided about the fourth or fifth day. And Lexington 1 and 2 still must decide what to do.

Lexington-Richland 5 will make up two flooding days, decide on other three

The new law is an improvement over the old law only if the school boards act as responsibly as Richland 1’s board did. And if it results in legislators keeping their hands off of their local districts’ calendars. Although the law no longer specifically authorizes legislators to waive school requirements in their local districts, it is the Legislature that writes the laws, so lawmakers will do that anyway if they feel like it.

Of course, even if legislators refrain from interfering, Richland 1’s decision to make up the lost days doesn’t guarantee that students will actually receive the 180 days of education that state law promises them. If we get a hint of snowfall this winter and schools are closed again, there will be demands that those days not be made up, because, well, it might be inconvenient for some parents. Or something.

The adolescent disdain for having to make up missed school days — as if education were a chore instead of a sacred right — is so rampant at the State House that the law allowing districts to eliminate school days applies to home-school students as well. As if parents who care enough about their kids’ education to teach them at home are clamoring for the right to shortchange them every time the weather turns bad.

There’s nothing magical about a 180-day school year. We could pack everything students need to know into 170 days, perhaps with a bit more homework; or we could stretch it out to 200 days. Or more, or less. What’s important about 180 is that’s the number of days we’ve told teachers they have to teach everything that needs to be covered in a year. When we take away a day, we make it more difficult to teach all that information. And students are much poorer as a result.

## **Johnson to hold Town Hall Tuesday for Q&A on flood relief**

by Robert Joseph Baker

[Manning Times](#)/Manning Live

October 23, 2015 4:28 am

Sen. Kevin Johnson is holding a Town Hall on Tuesday to provide “a one-stop location” for folks to find relief from damages caused by the so-called 1,000-year flood.

“We’re going to have those agencies like the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the S.C. Department of Workforce and Development and the Small Business Administration, among others, who will be there so people can ask them questions,” Johnson said.

Johnson said a similar meeting was held recently in Sumter the day after Gov. Nikki Haley held a Team South Carolina event in Sumter.

“We just want people to find the information they need to get back to normalcy,” Johnson said. Tuesday’s Town Hall will be moderated by WIS-TV’s Judi Gatson.

The meeting will be held 5-7 p.m. Tuesday at the Manning High School lecture hall.

## **Cayce city officials reopen some parks closed following floods**

[The State](#) (Columbia). Oct. 23, 2015

Some phases of the Cayce Riverwalk will be reopened to the public Saturday

Other parks and trails will be closed due to need for substantial repairs

Cayce city officials have announced timelines for parks and trails that have been closed since historic flooding hit the Midlands earlier this month.

Officials said the Cayce Riverwalk will open its four phases as follows:

Phase 1 from the North Avenue entrance to the Blossom Street Bridge will reopen Saturday.

Phase 2 from the North Avenue entrance to Riverland Park will be closed until further notice due to substantial repairs.

Phase 3 from Riverland Park to the Thomas Newman Boat Landing is currently closed but is expected to reopen next week.

Phase 4 from the Thomas Newman Boat Landing to the Timmerman Trail will reopen Saturday.

City officials said the entrance near the Cayce Tennis and Fitness Facility on the Fort Congaree Trail will also reopen Saturday.

Officials said the Thomas Newman Boat Landing will remain closed for substantial repairs, but its parking lot will reopen Saturday.

Riverland Park Entryway Park and the Granby Gardens Park will both be closed for planned improvements, officials said.

City officials urged that people using the reopened trails and parks use caution and to stay on designated pathways.

## **Mall offering free space to flood-damaged businesses**

[The State](#) (Columbia) Oct. 22, 2015

Businesses that suffered losses from the flooding this month can find reprieve in an area mall.

Columbia Place Mall has announced it will offer free rent to qualified businesses damaged by the historic storm.

“The recent flooding in Columbia right now affects more than the displaced businesses in the flood zone — it affects the lives of those within the community and surrounding areas,” said Shawl Pryor, senior vice president of Las Vegas-based Moonbeam Capital Investments, which owns the mall off Two Notch Road.

Columbia Place did not suffer any water damage from the recent flooding and opened its doors to tenants and shoppers the day after the storm passed.

The free rent offering will allow qualified businesses to temporarily relocate while they are rebuilding their existing flood-damaged space.

Moonbeam did not disclose details of how to qualify for the free space.

For more information, send an email to Courtney Brumbelow at [c.brumbelow@mlgpllc.com](mailto:c.brumbelow@mlgpllc.com).

## **MEMA sends another worker to help with South Carolina recovery efforts**

By Donesha Aldridge

[WJTV](#) (Mississippi), October 23, 2015

The Mississippi Emergency Management Agency is sending another worker to help with the flood disaster recovery efforts in South Carolina.

MEMA deployed its Voluntary Agency Liaison to South Carolina Friday morning.

Meredith Lee begins a two-week mission to assist with coordination of volunteer efforts. This brings the total to eight MEMA personnel provided through Emergency Management Assistance Compact requests by the state of South Carolina.

"The ongoing support provided by Mississippi is a testament to the high standard of emergency management capability and experience we have built here in our state which is vital to maintain," said MEMA Director Robert Latham. "We are extremely proud of the willingness of our staff to assist our friends in South Carolina during the historic flooding event.

## **Volunteers from 15 states responding in S.C.**

**Baptist Press** Friday, October 23, 2015

by Joe Conway

CHARLESTON, S.C. (BP) -- Hundreds of Southern Baptist Disaster Relief volunteers have provided significant service in South Carolina to survivors of flooding that covered the state in early October. SBDR leaders said they are encouraged by the outpouring of service and sacrifice.

"I am so thankful for the volunteers from many states who are willing to provide the help needed in the recovery process for those affected by the flooding," said Mickey Caison, North American Mission Board interim executive director for Disaster Relief. "The government leaders and emergency managers in the communities affected have expressed their deep appreciation of Southern Baptist Disaster Relief's ministry and volunteers who are so compassionate. Discussions have begun with community leaders about the need for rebuilding of homes in the flooded communities."

As of Oct. 22, SBDR volunteers from 15 states have been engaged in ministry in four primary areas of the state. A total of 493 homes have been assessed for recovery, mud-out or rebuild. To date, 577 homeowner assistance tasks have been completed, which include everything from minor cleanup to more extensive projects. Nearly 70,000 meals have been prepared in the response.

In preliminary reporting SBDR volunteers and chaplains have made at least 348 Gospel presentations. Thirty-five individuals have responded with professions of faith in Christ.

North Carolina Baptists have handled much of the volunteer work in the Myrtle Beach and Brunswick County, N. C., area. Volunteers from Alabama and Oklahoma have been serving with South Carolina volunteers in and around Columbia, S.C. Charleston has had teams serving from Florida, Louisiana, Oklahoma and Virginia, alongside South Carolina volunteers. Ministry in Horry County, is being conducted by volunteers from Mississippi, Missouri, New Jersey, North Carolina, Virginia, Pennsylvania and South Carolina. In different parts of the state teams from Florida, Georgia, Kentucky and Tennessee have also been serving.

"We never felt more like a neighborhood than we do now because of neighbors helping each other," said flood survivor Darin Cobb, who lives in the Park Hill Retreat neighborhood in North Charleston. "I knew that churches help, but I'm amazed at what they're doing."

Throughout the response college students have been using fall breaks and weekends to serve. Students from the Baptist College of Florida were serving in Summerville this week. Another group of college students began recovery and cleanup work at an apartment complex in Columbia on October 23.

"The collegiate and local church volunteer response to the great needs is so encouraging," Caison said. "God continues to use His people's love, and their willingness to share that love, in such real and practical ways. We are hearing many testimonies of homeowners accepting Christ as a result of the witness of volunteers."

"We continue to discover needs in many communities in South Carolina. As the water has receded, and roads are opening up, SBDR volunteers now have access to many homes in small rural communities. Please continue to pray for the SBDR leaders, volunteers and those affected in South Carolina," Caison said.

From ash-out ministry in California, Washington and Texas, to rebuild work in Detroit, SBDR volunteers are serving across the country. There are no less than eight active SBDR volunteer efforts ongoing, in addition to the relief efforts in South Carolina.

Volunteers from Kentucky, Ohio and Oklahoma are serving alongside Michigan SBDR teams to continue the long-term recovery efforts from August 2014 flooding in Detroit and the surrounding area. It was one of the largest natural disasters in Michigan history. Volunteers are needed for continuing recovery and rebuild efforts that will be ongoing for the foreseeable future.

NAMB coordinates and manages Southern Baptist responses to major disasters through partnerships with 42 state Baptist conventions, most of which have their own state disaster relief ministries.

Southern Baptists have 65,000 trained volunteers -- including chaplains -- and 1,550 mobile units for feeding, chainsaw, mud-out, command, communication, child care, shower, laundry, water purification, repair/rebuild and power generation. SBDR is one of the three largest mobilizers of trained disaster relief volunteers in the United States, along with the American Red Cross and The Salvation Army.

Joe Conway writes for the North American Mission Board. Those who would like to donate to SBDR relief can contact the Baptist convention in their state or visit [donations.namb.net/dr-donations](http://donations.namb.net/dr-donations).

## Helping neighbors to rebuild and recover

By Jack Little

Special to the [Moultrie News](#)

Friday, October 23, 2015

Two days after the recent flood, I had the opportunity to ride into Huger's French Quarter Creek community in the back of a National Guard convoy vehicle to survey the damage. I was invited to ride by the community's residents who were eager to discover what was left of their homes. They were in shock as they saw the waters had risen to record levels in the area. As we approached their homes, they came into the distant view. I sensed their hope and apprehension. When they gazed on their homes and saw the height of the standing water, they were in disbelief. There was heartbreak, gasping and crying. There was little exception to those residents who had not been affected by two to four feet of the storm's downpour.

I was there because ECCO serves this area of the community was in our service area but also because twenty-six years prior the community responded to a natural disaster that led to the birth of East Cooper Community Outreach (ECCO). Formed in 1989 in the aftermath of Hurricane Hugo, Christ Our King Catholic Church's newly arrived Monsignor James Carter led staff members to tour the immediate area. They were astonished by the loss and damage their community and neighbors had suffered from the storm. Church members were then urged to bring food and clothing to be distributed from the church. Not long after, Carter saw the necessity of inviting churches of all denominations to begin an ongoing organization to join in the effort of addressing the needs of the poor.

ECCO's Disaster Relief Fund was set up in 2008 with the successful completion of our "Advancing the Mission" fundraising campaign. This campaign supported the organization's growth to provide more comprehensive services for our neighbors in need, to expand the client service area in our building, and to establish a disaster relief fund. Response is our natural instinct to help victims of the recent flood in East Cooper since we were created at the cause of Hugo.

Due to the recent flooding, we are prepared to administer financial aid for those who were impacted by the disaster. The objective is helping our community to rebuild and recover. Our goal is to assist the poor and working poor restore their personal property and replace essential belongings. During the next several weeks and months we will see the needs of our low-income neighbors come forward after their lives have dried out and they discover the true extent of damage they have suffered.

Last week, we collected "Clean up Buckets," as Governor Haley called them, which are five-gallon buckets filled with cleaning supplies such as bleach, trash bags, face masks, cleaners and disinfectants, rubber gloves, brushes, mops, and brooms. We also collected personal hygiene kits as well as towels, bedding, and water.

I ask that you consider helping ECCO to replenish and enhance our Disaster Relief Fund. Support from the community will be used towards the restoration of homes and personal property that was lost or damaged in the flood. 100% of every dollar will go directly to the working poor and elderly who can least afford recovering from a disaster.

Please send your relief funds to:

ECCO - 2015 Flood Relief Fund

1145 Six Mile Road

Mount Pleasant, SC 29466

You can also visit our website [www.ECCOcharleston.org](http://www.ECCOcharleston.org) or text "ECCO" to 33923.

## ASPCA Mega Match-A-Thon Underway Across Lowcountry

[WCBD News 2](#), Mount Pleasant, October 23, 2015

CHARLESTON, SC – The 2015 ASPCA Mega-match-a-thon presented by Subaru is scheduled to run now through October 26. The event comes just as area rescues are recovering from flood.

Charleston Animal Society is one of 16 animal shelters across the country taking part in the community adoption events during the 4th Annual ASPCA 'Mega Match-a-thon' event presented by Subaru.

Charleston Animal Society is teaming up with other shelters in the Lowcountry, giving even more animals a chance to find loving homes:

Summerville – Francis R. Willis SPCA: <http://www.summervillespca.com>

Georgetown – St. Frances Animal Center: <http://www.sfanimals.org>

Ravenel – Feline Freedom Coalition: <http://www.felinefreedom.com>

Hollywood – Hallie Hill Sanctuary: <http://www.halliehill.com>

"These area shelters and sanctuaries were hit hard by the floods. Many potential adopting families are no longer able to rescue animals leaving these animal organizations in a dire situation. We need families to make room for one more and give these animals a home. If you absolutely cannot adopt, please contribute to these organizations," said Charleston Animal Society CEO Joe Elmore.

Charleston Animal Society will offer free adoptions on all animals as part of the Mega Match-a-Thon, and will stay open extended hours, 10am – 6pm.

“During the third annual ASPCA Mega Match-a-thon last October, 4,865 dogs and cats found homes in just one weekend,” said Julie Morris, senior vice president of community outreach for the ASPCA.

For more information, contact:

Kay Hyman, (843) 224.0899

[khyman@charlestonanimalsociety.org](mailto:khyman@charlestonanimalsociety.org)