

Title: **Haley heading to Ridgeland to answer storm-related questions**
 Author: STAFF REPORTS newsroom@islandpacket.com
 Size: 31.15 column inches
 Hilton Head Island, SC Circulation: 20015



HURRICANE MATTHEW AFTERMATH

Haley heading to Ridgeland to answer storm-related questions

STAFF REPORTS

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Get your post-Hurricane Matthew questions ready. South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley plans to visit Ridgeland on Wednesday

for a Hurricane Matthew relief event, a news release from her office said Thursday. The Team South Carolina Lowcountry Day will be held from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Jasper County Farmers Market.

Federal, state and non-profit organization officials will be available to answer questions from

residents of Beaufort, Jasper, Colleton and Hampton counties about assistance for families and businesses after the storm.

At the event, residents will have the opportunity to:

- 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 FE-

MA.

● 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 aid and financial assistance from the S.C. Department of Social Services.

● Get information about

mental health and other

health care 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.

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Title: **Few used the 300 school buses that SC sent to aid storm evacuees**
 Author: The Associated Press
 Size: 70.52 column inches
 Columbia, SC Circulation: 128564



AFTER HURRICANE MATTHEW

Few used the 300 school buses that SC sent to aid storm evacuees

The Associated Press

South Carolina spent nearly \$1 million sending 300 school buses to Charleston County on the coast during Hurricane Matthew to evacuate residents, but only 24 of the buses were used, state education records show.

And the only people who rode the buses to inland shelters were residents of a nursing home, according to information from the state Education Department obtained by The Greenville News.

Fuel for the buses, meals and hotels for the drivers and bus aides, the cost of a team from the state Forestry Commission and other expenses totaled \$954,779. State officials said they think federal disaster money should

repay much of that cost.

Some residents did go to North Charleston to get on the buses, but were directed to local shelters instead because of a rule that stated the buses couldn't be used until nearby shelters were at least half full.

Gov. Nikki Haley touted the buses for a few days after ordering evacuations along the coast as the hurricane threatened.

Her spokeswoman, Chaney Adams, said she was relying on county information and the program now will be reviewed.

"When local requests for assistance come in, as the state prepares for a storm, we listen to the needs of local officials," Adams said.

"In the aftermath of a storm,

state officials always consider what worked and what didn't, and that informs what can be handled better during the next state of emergency."

Hurricane Matthew killed five people in South Carolina, all connected to inland flooding from heavy rains.

The storm killed 42 people in the United States, more than half of them in North Carolina, and more than 500 people in Haiti.

Hurricane Matthew was a Category 4 storm when the governor ordered evacuations, and officials had to take into account the possibility of a direct hit without any weakening, Education Department spokesman Ryan Brown said.

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MIC SMITH Associated Press

Bus drivers with the Greenville school district wait by their buses in the parking lot at the North Charleston Coliseum for word when to start evacuating people from North Charleston on Oct. 5.

Title: **FEMA OKs town's request; county's under review**
 Author: BY KELLY MEYERHOFER kmeyerhofer@islandpacket.com
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DEBRIS REMOVAL FROM PRIVATE ROADS

FEMA OKs town's request; county's under review

BY KELLY MEYERHOFER

kmeyerhofer@islandpacket.com

The Federal Emergency Management Agency has approved the Town of Hilton Head Island's request for debris removal from private roads and rights-of-way — with some conditions — under FEMA's Public Assistance Program, Gov. Nikki Haley's office announced Wednesday night.

The following communities are covered under the approval, according to a FEMA letter, dated Wednesday and released by the Governor's Office to The Island Packet and The Beaufort Gazette:

- Hilton Head Plantation
- Indigo Run Plantation
- Palmetto Dunes Resort
- Palmetto Hall Plantation
- Port Royal Plantation
- Sea Pines Plantation
- Shipyard Plantation
- Spanish Wells
- Wexford Plantation

The following six properties have been approved by FEMA for private-property debris removal, "pending the submission of additional documentation," according to the letter from W. Michael Moore, federal coordinating officer and disaster recovery manager with FEMA to

Hilton Head town manager Steve Riley and Kim Stenson, the S.C. Emergency Management Division director:

- Cedar Wells Apartments
- Leamington Association
- Long Cove Club Owner's Association
- Sea Pines Resort
- Squire Pope Mobile Home Park
- Sylby Tub Apartments

"Any other areas where private property debris removal is in the public interest will be considered on a case-by-case basis," the letter said, noting those requests must be submitted "within 90 days of the date of this letter."

FEMA's approval requires the town to "provide a full and complete roster of all private property onto which it entered to remove debris under this authority," and to "assist the federal government in recovering any insurance proceeds after a reasonable search to ascertain from the property owners any insurance proceeds that they may have been paid for such debris removal under this program," the letter said.

Debris from "vacant lots, forests, heavily wooded areas, unimproved property, and unused areas" is not covered under the approval, according to the letter. In addition, FEMA's Public Assistance Program "generally prohibits removal of debris from commercial properties," the letter said.

"This is great news and what we were hoping for," Riley said.

Beaufort County's application is still under review, but state Sen. Tom Davis, R-Beaufort, did not seem worried.

"My sense is that it's a paperwork delay," he said Wednesday evening. "It'd be hard to allow it on Hilton Head and not the rest of Beaufort County."

FEMA received the town's application last Friday. Beaufort County has been providing additional paperwork to FEMA over the past week.

If FEMA approves the county's application, Hilton Head's non-gated communities that require additional paperwork under the town's application would be covered under the county's, deputy

SEE DEBRIS, 7A

FROM PAGE 1A

DEBRIS

county administrator Josh Gruber said.

To bolster the county's

case for federal reimbursement of cleanup on private roads, the County

Council voted to declare a state-of-health emergency Monday night.

By issuing the proclamation, the county has legal authority to clear debris

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from private roads and rights-of-way, Gruber said. It also helps their case for federal reimbursement, he said.

But the action also means Beaufort County assumes responsibility for the cost of clearing private roads and rights-of-way if FEMA denies the county's reimbursement request.

"We're really sort of playing chicken with FEMA thinking we're going

to force their hand on this, but if they don't, there's a severe penalty to us," council vice chair Jerry Stewart said.

The county's contract for debris removal on public roads alone is nearly \$10 million. If the feds deny reimbursement, private roads would add at least another \$10 million to the county's bill.

A denial would severely deplete the county's exist-

ing reserve fund, which hovers around \$26 million, and leave local officials scrambling to replace reserves in anticipation of the next storm.

"It will cost millions, and it is risky," county administrator Gary Kubic said.

But it's also necessary. "Without you all passing this resolution, it is a certainty that we will not be able to get FEMA aid,"

U.S. Rep. Mark Sanford, R-Charleston, said.

The irony of the situation is not lost on council members.

"FEMA has put us between a rock and a hard spot," Stewart said. "The county has to make a commitment prior to

knowing what we're committing to."

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Courtesy of Charlene Riikonen

Debris piles rise in Palmetto Hall on Hilton Head Island as local residents wait for FEMA to make a decision on reimbursement for cleanup.

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Courtesy of Kathy Smith

Debris lines the shoulders along Oyster Bay Place and Oyster Batteau, two roads in Hilton Head Plantation.

Title: **Horry County schools set makeup days**
 Author: BY AUGUST R. DITTBENNER AUGUST.DITTBENNER@MYHORRYNEWS.COM
 Size: 43.4 column inches
 Conway, SC Circulation: 6250



Horry County schools set makeup days

BY AUGUST R. DITTBENNER

AUGUST.DITTBENNER@MYHORRYNEWS.COM

Horry County students, parents and teachers can expect to start making up days missed due to Hurricane Matthew as early as the day before Thanksgiving.

District Superintendent Rick Maxey announced three makeup days Monday at the Horry County

School Board meeting. In addition to Nov. 23, students will be expected to attend school on Jan. 2 and Jan. 13.

According to state regulations signed into law by S.C. Governor Nikki Haley in May of 2015, school districts are required to make up three days missed due to inclement weather. If

more days are missed, the district is required to either make up those days or seek waivers to excuse those days.

Horry County students missed seven days of classes, except for students in Green Sea Floyds Elementary and Green Sea Floyds High, who missed eight due to power out-

ages.

"After those three days are made up it is possible for the local board of trustees to waive the next three days with a majority vote of the board," Maxey said. "If it goes beyond six days -- to seven, eight, nine

MAKEUP DAYS, A3

Makeup days: *Students can expect to start makeup days as early as the day before Thanksgiving*

FROM A1

-- it allows the local board of trustees to vote to ask for a waiver from the state board of education."

Any days beyond the first nine require action by the state legislature, Maxey added.

Maxey pointed out that the district builds three makeup days into the school calendar, but because one of those days, Oct. 10, occurred as the county was reeling from the effects of Matthew it was unusable. The other two days, one in February and one in April, will be "deep into second semester," he noted.

The same state law that outlines how makeup days can be excused also advises school boards to hold makeup days, if possible, during the semester when they were missed.

"All of this happened in first semester," Maxey said. "This is especially important for our high schools that have four-by-four schedules."

In Horry County high schools, students take four classes in the fall semester and four new ones in the spring semester.

Because of that, if the district waits to make up the missed days students will not receive any instructional time to replace the days that were missed, but will instead have added time in their spring classes.

"In complying with the law, in thinking about making those days up during the first semester and in looking at it from a teacher's perspective, we

have an obligation to our students to prepare them for the end-of-class tests that many of them will take," Maxey stated.

In selecting the three dates for making up missed classes, Maxey met with a cabinet that consisted of principals from elementary, middle and high school grade levels as well as other key district personnel. In the end, Maxey said, everyone reached a consensus.

"We looked at what would provide the least impact as far as schedules were concerned," he said.

Parents, though, he acknowledged, might not like having the day before Thanksgiving or the day after New Year's taken away from them due to travel plans.

"We understand that people make plans for the holidays," Maxey said. "I do, too. We all do."

But because students in Horry County will miss close to a week's worth of instructional time, Maxey believes that the makeup

days are critical.

"Our students are competing with other students for admission to colleges across our state, and for scholarships," he said.

"Those students didn't miss those days prior to taking their end-of-course tests."

When asked whether he expected families to let students skip some of the scheduled makeup days, Maxey pointed out that the district's attendance policy is clearly stated in the student handbook.

"In elementary and middle school, unless you're a

middle schooler taking a high school course, a parent excuse may be utilized for 10 days," Maxey said. "If you're a high school student that's limited to five days.

"That's an individual decision that families have to make," he concluded.

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FROM PAGE 1A

DEBRIS

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A denial would severely deplete the county's existing reserve fund, which hovers around \$26 million, and leave local officials scrambling to replace reserves in anticipation of the next storm.

"It will cost millions, and it is risky," county administrator Gary Kubic said.

But it's also necessary. "Without you all passing this resolution, it is a cer-

tainty that we will not be able to get FEMA aid," U.S. Rep. Mark Sanford, R-Charleston, said.

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Courtesy of Charlene Riikonen

Debris piles rise in Palmetto Hall on Hilton Head Island as local residents wait for FEMA to make a decision on reimbursement for cleanup.

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Courtesy of Kathy Smith

Debris lines the shoulders along Oyster Bay Place and Oyster Batteau, two roads in Hilton Head Plantation.

Title: **Makeup days expected before Christmas break**
 Author: BY REBECCA LURYE rlurye@islandpacket.com
 Size: 12.71 column inches
 Hilton Head Island, SC Circulation: 20015



BEAUFORT COUNTY SCHOOLS

Make up days expected before Christmas break

BY REBECCA LURYE
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Beaufort County Schools have scheduled makeup days for Hurricane Matthew for the third week of December, the first week of winter break, district spokesman Jim Foster said.

The first day of break was scheduled to be Saturday, Dec. 17.

Instead, students will have a half day on Dec. 22 and start winter break Friday, Dec. 23.

The district also lost one school day last month during Tropical Storm Hermine. Students will return a day early from winter break — on

Wednesday, Jan. 4 — to make up that day.

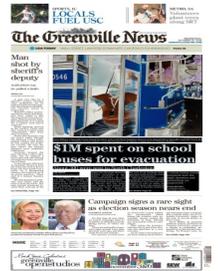
The district lost eight instructional days — Oct. 5 to Friday — after Gov. Nikki Haley ordered coastal counties to evacuate ahead of the storm. South Carolina laws covering minimum instructional time required the district to restore most of those days.

The school board will make the final decision on the adjusted calendar at its next meeting on Tuesday, Nov. 1, Foster said.

The district will ask the State Board of Education to waive the eighth day.

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Title: **\$1M spent on school buses for evacuation**
 Author: TIM SMITH TCSMITH@GREENVILLENEWS.COM
 Size: 119.04 column inches
 Greenville, SC Circulation: 113473



\$1M spent on school buses for evacuation

About 300 were sent to North Charleston

TIM SMITH

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COLUMBIA - The operation that sent hundreds of Greenville County school buses to the North Charleston Coliseum to evacuate people from Hurricane Matthew but wound up only taking residents from a nursing home cost the state almost \$1 million, according to esti-

mates provided to *The Greenville News* by the state Department of Education. The total includes the cost of drivers and bus aides, fuel, meals and hotels for personnel from Greenville, Lexington and Richland school districts, as well as

the cost of an incident management team from the state Forestry Commission.

The plan had been to send hundreds of buses to North Charleston for a one-day operation to cart as many as 7,500 of those who wanted to evacuate to Upstate shelters

"I think being overly prepared was the right decision and something we supported."

RYAN BROWN,
A SPOKESMAN FOR THE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

See **BUSES**, Page 6A

Buses

Continued from Page 1A

on the Wednesday before the hurricane's arrival that Saturday.

But because of a number of factors, including a desire by many Charleston-area residents not to leave and a rule that local shelters had to be at least half full before evacuees could be bussed to Greenville, no individual evacuees ever boarded the buses, which sat idle for nearly two days.

About 24 Greenville buses were used eventually to evacuate residents of a nursing home, but the majority of buses returned to their school systems without carrying evacuees.

"When local requests for assistance come in, as the state prepares for a storm, we listen to the needs of local officials," said Chaney Adams, press secretary for Gov. Nikki Haley. "In the aftermath of a storm, state officials always consider what worked and what didn't, and that informs what can be handled better during the next state of emergency."

The operation used about 300 buses, at least 200 of them from Greenville County, which supplied about 300 drivers, bus aides and maintenance

personnel, officials said. The Greenville buses were escorted to North Charleston by Greenville County deputies.

Ryan Brown, a spokesman for the Department of Education, said using school buses for a hurricane coastal evacuation is part of the state emergency plan because the buses are owned by the state.

He said at the time the evacuation plan was crafted, Matthew had just torn through Haiti and was a strong Category 4 storm.

"At the time that was decided, we were planning for the worst," he said. "It would have been a much worse situation had we been hit with a massive hurricane and not had enough buses there. I think being overly prepared was the right decision and something we supported."

State Department of Education officials estimate that \$954,779 was spent on the school bus evacuation operation. That includes driver compensation, fuel, state and local area staff time, travel expenses, and other costs, said Ryan.

He said the agency has not yet received itemized claims from the

school districts. Brown said officials have not calculated any indirect costs, such as students missing school in Greenville County from the lack of buses.

The State Forestry Commission estimates it spent about \$34,256 for its incident management team to work at the coliseum, of which \$21,000 was above the normal costs of staff working at the agency, a spokesman said. He said 19 employees worked in the operation.

National Guard personnel also were at the coliseum site to help check in evacuees. Their costs were not included in the estimates.

Most of the costs are expected to eventually be covered by the federal government.

Over the two days, dozens of residents appeared at the coliseum hoping to be bused to Greenville County shelters but were sent to local shelters instead. Some of those told *The News* then that they were frustrated at not being able to leave the Lowcountry before the hurricane hit.

Mike Bozzo, incident commander for the state Forestry Commission's incident management team at the



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coliseum, said at the time local shelters were less than 10 percent full.

“The weather doesn’t seem threatening so people are not seeing the need to evacuate,” he said then. “A lot of people have evacuated on their own as the interstates showed the last couple of days.”

Greenville bus drivers who could not stay more than a day were given the option of leaving that Wednesday evening and some did. But most stayed.

“In a response of this magnitude, state leaders must plan for the

worst, hope for the best, and adjust the plan as needed,” said Elizabeth Brotherton, a spokeswoman for the Greenville County Schools. “The fact that our drivers’ mission was altered reflected changes in our state’s response based on the hurricane’s track, so we are not at all disappointed that shelters in Charleston were able to open and meet most of the area’s evacuation needs locally.”

She said while it was inconvenient that drivers expected to return home Wednesday afternoon and in-

stead were asked to stay for an undetermined period of time, the district was kept informed of developments and were able to swap out personnel.

“Drivers who could not stay because of other commitments were able to return to Greenville,” she said. “Our bus drivers voluntarily responded to a call for help when our state’s citizens were under threat. We are extremely proud of their selfless action and the small role we played in the state’s emergency response.”

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HEIDI HEILBRUNN/STAFF

Wince Williams, a Greenville County Schools bus driver, waits at the North Charleston Coliseum to be released back to Greenville. Greenville County bus drivers traveled to Charleston to bring residents evacuating Charleston to the Upstate in preparation for Hurricane Matthew.

Title: **Greenville County receives \$135k for 125 body cameras**
 Author: AMANDA COYNE THE GREENVILLE NEWS
 Size: 9.61 column inches
 Greenville, SC Circulation: 113473



Greenville County receives \$135k for 125 body cameras

AMANDA COYNE

THE GREENVILLE NEWS

The Greenville County Sheriff's Office is receiving \$135,000 from the state of South Carolina to implement its first body cameras.

The funds, approved at last week's Greenville County Council meeting, will pay for 125 body cameras to be used by sheriff's deputies.

This puts the department in compliance with a law signed by Gov. Nikki Haley last year mandating all law enforcement agencies in the state use cameras.

The money for the cameras is disbursed by the South Carolina Public Safety Coordinating Council.

Whether the 125 cameras is sufficient for the county agency is yet to be determined, said Master Deputy Ryan Flood, a Sheriff's Office spokesman.

"That will be up to the sheriff," Flood said in an email. "State law mandates that those uniformed officers whose primary function is dealing with the public be outfitted with them."

Title: **Future of MOX cautiously optimistic**
 Author: BY THOMAS GARDINER tgardiner@aikenstandard.com
 Size: 58.74 column inches
 Aiken, SC Circulation: 19635



Future of MOX cautiously optimistic

BY THOMAS GARDINER
tgardiner@aikenstandard.com

Last month, Russia's decision to suspend the Plutonium Management and Disposition Agreement with the U.S. left the future of South Carolina's Mixed Oxide Fuel Fabrication Facility hanging in the balance. But experts say the future of the beleaguered facility at the Savannah River Site remains cautiously optimistic.

U.S. Nuclear Infrastructure Council's David Blee said it's important to look at several factors

surrounding the agreement suspension.

"It's important to recognize that Russia suspended the (Plutonium Management and Disposition Agreement) and did not terminate the agreement; that's an important distinction," he said.

Blee said the Russian decision puts the ball in the U.S. court, leaving the future of the nonproliferation agreement, and the MOX

facility, in the hands of Department of Energy decision-makers.

According to Russian media sources, Russian President Vladimir Putin opted to suspend the agreement because of a departure from the agreement by the Americans.

Aside from being fanned by international pressures and diplomacy breakdowns between the two superpowers in Syria, President Barack Obama's administration's

National Nuclear Security Administration spent the last several years trying to move away from the agreed conditions under the agreement with Russia.

"The DOE's reckless and cavalier approach to the pursuit of other options at the expense of the MOX facility really created an opening for the Russians and put this landmark

Please see **MOX**, Page A10

MOX

MOX, from A1

nonproliferation agreement in jeopardy," Blee said.

The current administration chose to move from MOX to an alternative method of disposal for the plutonium called dilute and disposal, also known as downblending.

Through MOX, weapons-grade plutonium is processed and mixed with natural uranium to create fuel for commercial nuclear reactors. Once processed, the plutonium can never be converted back to a weapons usable form, a major factor in the method's selection between the two nations.

Under the downblending option, plutonium is ground down into small particles and is mixed with inert materials. The mixture will then be buried in a deep geological repository like the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant in New Mexico.

According to Russian sources

and American nuclear experts, the downblending option does not render the plutonium unusable for future military purposes — a concern that drove the Russians to suspend the agreement.

Blee said it is also important to consider the short time remaining for the Obama administration.

"For the next administration, this is a huge wake-up call. No one wants to see this landmark agreement jeopardized," he said.

Blee called the future of the MOX facility at SRS optimistic, but the NNSA isn't so sure. In an email statement from the NNSA, the administration affirmed its dedication to the downblending alternative.

The statement said, "The United States remains fully committed to verifiably disposing of our surplus plutonium. The United States is pursuing an alternative that is less than half the cost of the

MOX option, has far lower risks, and can be implemented decades sooner. The decision by Russia only reinforces the Administration's decision to pursue the already proven alternative approach, which will save tens of billions of dollars while upholding our commitment to dispose of surplus plutonium."

Blee said the funding changes and lack of communication between the Energy Department and the Russians put the MOX project into a kind of "star-stop" limbo.

"We believe you can't have the start-stop approach to big DOE projects. This (MOX) is a very close parallel to Yucca Mountain. We want to see shovels in motion on a project that's nearly 70 percent complete. It shouldn't be subject to the passing fancies of this administration."

South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley considers the MOX pro-

gram a primary pathway out of the state for nuclear material and a commitment made by the U.S. government.

In a statement from Haley's office, her press secretary said, "As the governor has said time and again, South Carolina will not be a dumping ground for nuclear waste — it's both a quality of life and economic development issue. The federal government owes it to South Carolinians to live up to its promises, and that includes removing waste from our state."

Blee said he could not speculate as to what policies may look like under the next administration but said there is tremendous value for anything that can disposition plutonium.

"The Russian suspension is a wake-up call for the Department of Energy, and the Kremlin is telling them what's at stake here," he said. "It's the jeopardization of a landmark nonproliferation agreement."

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COURTESY OF HIGH FLYER/SRS WATCH

The MOX building under construction at Savannah River Site.