

Title: **Price-gouging law protects storm victims**
 Author: BY JOHN MCDERMOTT jmcdermott@postandcourier.com
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Price-gouging law protects storm victims

Statute in effect for next 15 days as people start to make repairs

BY JOHN MCDERMOTT
jmcdermott@postandcourier.com

The state is reminding residents and businesses that South Carolina's law against price gouging is in effect.

The statute kicked in Friday when Gov. Nikki Haley issued a state of

emergency because of the flooding, S.C. Attorney General Alan Wilson said Monday. It is in effect for the next 15 days.

The law prohibits "unconscionable prices during times of disaster," his office said in a written statement. It's a misdemeanor offense punishable with a \$1,000 fine and/or 30 days in jail.

"As we continue to recover from the catastrophic damage caused to our state, we will see many neighbors helping each other rebuild. However, we may also see some looking to unfairly take advantage of the

situation through price gouging of food, gasoline, lodging, water and any other commodities as defined by the statute.

Pursuant to state law, price gouging constitutes a criminal violation and an unfair trade practice," Wilson said. He said residents can notify his office immediately about any instances of price gouging.

They can email any examples or documentation about likely violations to info@scag.gov; tweet photographs or examples on Twitter by tagging @SCPriceGouging; or call 803-737-3953.

Title: **Rising to flood's challenge**

Author:

Size: 47.58 square inch

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Editorials

Rising to flood's challenge

Catastrophic rainstorms like this one happen only every thousand years, climate and weather experts explained as unprecedented flooding forced people out of their homes, closed roads and submerged stalled vehicles. One can only hope that assessment holds true.

As of Monday afternoon, at least 11 people had died as a result of the floodwaters, with more than 500 roads still closed to traffic statewide and 26,000 South Carolinians without power.

It was, as Gov. Nikki Haley said, "a storm of historic proportions."

It could have been much worse.

Across South Carolina, employees of local, state and federal agencies worked alongside volunteers on Monday to rescue stranded people and pets. Shelters housed those forced from their homes, and first responders patrolled neighborhoods in boats and amphibious vehicles checking on residents. The National Guard rescued people by helicopter.

The effectiveness and dedication of emergency personnel have been remarkable. Their actions have been nothing short of heroic in many instances.

In the Charleston area, the official response to flooding evolved quickly and efficiently as the heaviest rain began falling in the Lowcountry on Saturday. Proactive efforts like closing the Charleston peninsula, which required an emergency ordinance passed by City Council on Saturday, undoubtedly saved thousands from traffic tie-ups, vehicle damage or worse.

But with floodwaters receding in Charleston on Monday, residents of the Midlands region of the state were still dealing with waters so high they approached rooftops in some areas. That afternoon, broken dams outside

of Columbia forced mandatory evacuations of some neighborhoods.

And rainwater flowing from regions farther upstate threatens to exacerbate the situation over the next few days.

South Carolina's highways also suffered severe damage from the storm. Far from simple cracks and potholes, entire chunks of roads and bridges collapsed and washed away.

Of course, many of the roads with the worst damage were already in deplorable shape long before the storm hit. As if further impetus were needed, the widespread destruction caused by this storm should spur the South Carolina Legislature to enact needed measures that will allow the state to shore up crumbling roads and bridges.

Dams, sea walls, ditches and drainage infrastructure will also need improvements and reinforcements to help protect against the next serious storm system.

In the Lowcountry, gradually rising sea levels threaten to turn even much smaller storms into dangerous disasters. Mitigating the effects of future floods should be a top priority for every new development, road or infrastructure project in the Charleston area.

It will likely take days or even weeks to fully understand the scope of the damage done to this state. Undoubtedly, it will be shocking.

"This is one for the record books," local Clemson Extension agent Charles W. Davis Jr. told our reporter. "We've had rain events before, and they were never very pretty, but this is the one the old-timers are going to talk about. It's a shipwreck."

Recovery will take time for the South Carolinians who lost their homes, their cars and their belongings. And families and friends are grieving the truly irreplaceable losses of

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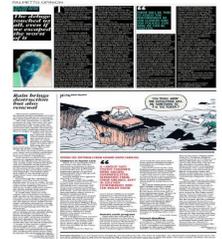
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at least 11 lives.

A flood as extreme as the one that inundated much of the state this weekend was all but unthinkable until the water started to rise.

Fortunately, the state's residents, leaders and emergency personnel responded with unblinking poise and bravery. We must work to prepare for the next disaster, even if it doesn't happen for a thousand years.

Title: **The deluge touched us all, even if we escaped the worst of it**
 Author:
 Size: 61.22 square inch
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CINDI ROSS SCOPPE
ASSOCIATE EDITOR
THE STATE

The deluge touched us all, even if we escaped the worst of it

THE RAINWATER pooled on my front sidewalk Sunday morning, just as it does every time we get a heavy rain. Two miles away, it swallowed up entire cars, collapsed buildings, flooded businesses and took at least one life.

A friend had to escape through a window as the raging storm water overtook his SUV. I had to drive slowly when I ventured out of the house Sunday afternoon.

My water went out, which presents all sorts of problems that you never think of until it happens — but which is a minor inconvenience compared with what so many of my neighbors down the street, across the Midlands and throughout South Carolina are enduring. I wasn't flooded out of my home, wasn't trapped by surging water, didn't have to be rescued by our amazing first responders or forced to seek shelter with friends or strangers. As so many were.

This is the story that has repeated across our state, as elevation and wind direction and even luck did an earthen dam near your home or business breach, or remain intact? determined the degree of damage. The storm that swamped South Carolina over the weekend was so massive that each of us knows someone who is suf-

fering. The storm was so massive that all of us were touched in some way, even if just by the inconvenience of having to keep the kids home from school that are closed, or the prospect of

the state's dialogue being overtaken by its aftermath.

Most of us were spared the life-changing toll a storm of this magnitude can take. Is taking.

For this, I offer up my prayers of thanks. For those not so fortunate, I offer up my prayers of intercession.

As should we all.

And we all should offer up our assistance. We should check on our neighbors. We should reach out to those in need — even if we offer them nothing more than a friendly ear and opened arms. If we have time, we should volunteer to help the United Way or the Red Cross or other service organizations that are trying to help people survive from one day to the next and then start putting their lives back together. Money probably wouldn't hurt, if you want to send a check to the United Way or the Central Carolina Community Foundation. I'm sure Harvest Hope and the other food banks around the state would be happy to accept your monetary or food donations.

The worst may be over; it may not be. Flooding will continue as

rivers crest and overflow their banks from the mountains to the coast. More victims may be discovered as the flood waters recede and as rescuers and neighbors are able to venture into homes that were flooded.

We have not yet begun to count the damage to private and public property, or to our infrastructure. More dams may breach, more bridges may collapse, more roads may disintegrate as

the rain continues, as the rivers crest, as the traffic rolls back over water-weakened asphalt.

Our local and state leaders will be tested — are being tested — by the storm. There will be time to assess their performance. There will be time to consider what, if anything, we could have done differently to make this less devastating; Would better maintained bridges and roads have survived the storm? In Columbia, the same question can be asked of a water system whose funding has been diverted to frivolities. Would more conservative zoning have kept homes and businesses out of harm's way? Do we have, and enforce, adequate dam-safety regulations? Or was this deluge just too overwhelming for even the best public policy to make a difference?

For now, we can be grateful to the first responders who put



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their own lives at risk to save so many others over the weekend. Who are still out there, still saving lives. We can be grateful

for the good Samaritans who added their assistance, not because it was their job but because it was their calling. We can be grateful to the public officials, from Gov. Nikki Haley and Adjutant General Bob Livingston to sheriffs and police chiefs and mayors and council members and city managers, who offered calm but firm warnings, who put in place curfews and called on schools and busi-

nesses to close in order to, in Gov. Haley's words, "give us the space that we need" to begin to put the state back together.

And we can remember to practice patience.

The recovery will not be quick. Roads and bridges will take weeks or months to repair. Some homes and businesses will take longer — if they can even be salvaged. People who have been uprooted will not find normalcy soon, and the displacement will disrupt their entire lives, exacting a tremendous emotional toll. Those of us

who have been merely inconvenienced can quickly forget that we were fortunate, that the damage was tremendous, that the suffering continues and that there is so much work to be done, for individuals and for our communities.

Be kind. Be careful. Be helpful. And do unto others as you would have them do unto you. We are one family. Together, we will recover.

Ms. Scoppa can be reached at scoppa@thestate.com or at (803) 771-8571.

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THERE WILL BE TIME TO ASSESS THE PERFORMANCE OF OUR LEADERS AND OUR POLICIES. FOR NOW, WE CAN BE GRATEFUL.



Title: **THOUSANDS WITHOUT DRINKABLE WATER**
 Author: By SEANNA ADCOX and JEFFREY COLLINS The Associated Press
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THOUSANDS WITHOUT DRINKABLE WATER

South Carolina residents are still recovering from the damage caused by Hurricane Joaquin. The state is still recovering from the damage caused by Hurricane Joaquin. The state is still recovering from the damage caused by Hurricane Joaquin.

SOUTH CAROLINA FLOODING

THOUSANDS WITHOUT DRINKABLE WATER

‘Fire hose’ of moisture slams SC; at least 12 people killed

By SEANNA ADCOX and JEFFREY COLLINS

The Associated Press

COLUMBIA — People across South Carolina got an object lesson Monday in how you can dodge a hurricane and still get hammered.

Authorities struggled to get water to communities swamped by it, and with waterlogged dams overflowing, bridges collapsing, hundreds of roads inundated and floodwaters rolling down to the coast, the state was anything but done with this disaster.

“This is a Hugo-level event,” said Maj. Gen. Robert Livingston, head of the South Carolina National Guard, referring to the September 1989 hurricane that devastated Charleston. “We didn’t see this level of erosion in Hugo. ... This water doesn’t fool around.”

Much-feared Hurricane Joaquin missed the

East Coast, but fueled what experts at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration called a “fire hose” of tropical moisture that aimed directly at the state. A solid week of rainfall killed at least 12 people, sent about 1,000 to shelters and left about 40,000 without drinkable water.

One of the latest to die was McArthur Woods, 56, who drove around a barricade and drowned Sunday night. His passenger managed to climb on top of the sedan, which stalled in the rushing water. A firefighter rescued her after someone heard her screams.

“She came out the window. How she got on top of the car and stayed there like she did with

MORE INSIDE

How did the heavy rains, high tides affect Beaufort County? **3A**

Please see **FLOOD** on **9A**

FLOOD

Continued from **1A**

that water — there’s a good Lord,” Kershaw County Coroner David West said.

By Monday, the heaviest rains had moved into the mid-Atlantic states. Along the Jersey Shore, some beaches devastated by Superstorm Sandy three years ago lost most of their sand to the wind, rain and high surf. South Carolina authorities mostly switched Monday from search and rescue into “assessment and recovery mode,” but Gov. Nikki Haley warned citizens to remain

careful as a “wave” of water swelled downstream and dams had to be opened to prevent catastrophic failures above low-lying neighborhoods near the capital.

“South Carolina has gone through a storm of historic proportions,” Haley said. “Just because the rain stops, does not mean that we are out of the woods.”

Indeed, shortly after the governor’s news conference, authorities evacuated an area on the northeast side

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of Columbia after a dam on Rockyford Lake burst around 2 p.m. Monday.

James Shirer lives in the area and said he saw the dam fail and a 22-acre lake drain in 10 to 15 minutes.

"It just poured out," Shirer said.

The 16.6 inches of rain that fell at Gills Creek near downtown Columbia on Sunday made for one of the rainiest days recorded at a U.S. weather station in more than 16 years.

An Associated Press reporter surveying the scene by helicopter saw the entire eastern side of the capital city awash in floodwater. Neither trailer parks nor upscale neighborhoods were spared: One mansion's swimming pool was filled with a yellowish broth.

South Carolina is accused to water, but not like this.

The state hosts 30,000 miles of rivers and streams that mostly run from the Appalachians to the sea, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. It also has another 24,000 miles of "perennial waterways"

— streams that are usually dry but can turn deadly in flash floods. Now swollen by a week of rain, they have carved new channels through an aging infrastructure.

According to the American Society of Civil Engineers, 1,048 of the 9,275 bridges were structurally deficient before this storm. Some 550 roads and bridges remained closed on Monday, including nearly 75 miles of Interstate 95. The governor said they will need close inspection to ensure they're safe.

Some towns were entirely cut off. About 60 miles southeast of the capital, all four

roads leading into the county seat of Manning were closed, isolating 4,000 people. Many smaller communities in Clarendon County are in a similar predicament, Sheriff Randy Garrett said.

"I'm the sheriff of a bunch of islands," Garrett said.

The National Guard's Blackhawk helicopters were the best — and only — way to reach some places, and authorities were just starting to identify "vulnerable areas that may not be completely obvious," said Livingston, a two-star general.

The Blackhawk crew including Chief Warrant Officer 2 Antonio Montgomery finished its rescue training just in time for the storm, and quickly put it to use.

Some people waved towels at them, begging for rescues; neighbors would then step out onto their porches, too,

asking to be lifted to safety.

Montgomery, 34, served in Iraq 10 years ago, but there is something different about helping a place where his crew has lived, he said. "It's our home. We've all had friends and families who have lost things."

At a Red Cross shelter in Rowesville, Nyshambi Vega of Holly Hill, about 50 miles northwest of Charleston, settled onto a cot with her boys — ages 2, 1 and 5 months — and hoped for the best.

Like most of her neighbors in her public housing complex, the 24-year-old mother had hoped to ride out the storm. Then the water reached her front door, and the toilet backed up. They were rescued Sunday morning by firefighters who walked small boats through the parking lot.

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The Associated Press

Jerry Hardy and his wife Tracey evacuate their family from floodwaters near Conway on Monday. As showers tapered off Monday, the governor warned communities downstream, near the low-lying coast, that they may still see rising water and to be prepared for more evacuations.

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The Associated Press

Samantha Scroggins and Janet Smalley smile as they navigate through waist-deep water in Conway on Monday.



Title: **SAID**
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SAID

“ This is going to be a long process. It’s not going to be convenient.”

GOV. NIKKI HALEY, in discussing recovery from South Carolina's historic floods, **Page 1A**

Title: 'A CATASTROPHE OF INCREDIBLE PROPORTION'
 Author: TIM SMITH TCSMITH@GREENVILLENEWS.COM
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RESCUE AND RECOVERY

'A CATASTROPHE OF INCREDIBLE PROPORTION'

Deadly storm system prompts presidential disaster declaration

TIM SMITH

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COLUMBIA — President Barack Obama has declared portions of South Carolina a major disaster area in the wake of a storm system that dumped historic levels of rain from the coast to the Midlands, killing nine people and leaving a large swath of South Carolina damaged.

The president's action, which had been sought by the state, makes federal funding available to affected individuals or government agencies in the counties of Berkeley, Charleston, Clarendon, Dorchester, Georgetown, Horry, Lexington, Orangeburg, Richland, Sumter and Williamsburg.

The declaration came Monday as rescues and evacuations continued and heavy rains eased. One area of Columbia was evacuated Monday afternoon following a dam failure that caused flash flood warnings for the Forest

Flood

Continued from Page 1A

were evacuated earlier Monday because of flood threats from swollen rivers.

Gov. Nikki Haley earlier in the day cautioned citizens not to get complacent thinking the storm had passed.

"Just because the rain stops doesn't mean the danger stops," she said.

An estimated 40,000 people in the Midlands, many in downtown Columbia, were without safe drinking water for the second day and companies, the federal government and firefighters stepped up to help, officials said on Monday.

The Columbia outage happened because of a 60-foot breach in the Colum-

bia Canal, a source of drinking water for the capital, as well as because there were at least 12 water-main breaks from the storm, a city official explained.

The lack of drinking water affected not just residents, college students and businesses but also hospitals in the city. Gov. Haley hailed the efforts of Columbia firefighters who spent Sunday night and Monday trucking water to the hospitals to ensure the facilities had safe drinking water.

Water was never cut off to the hospitals, officials said, but the water to all residents came with boil advisories, which officials said Monday would remain indefinitely.

As a result, the federal government

is sending 55 tractor-trailers loaded with 355,000 bottles of water to the city, officials said, and several companies, including Walmart and Home Depot, have donated water supplies.

Mayor Benjamin said the city's workers must brave not only flood waters but threats from downed power lines and poisonous water moccasins in their efforts to restore water service.

Missy Gentry, assistant city manager for operations, warned that water supplies could be cut off again as the city makes repairs and reroutes water lines.

"Even if you have water today," she said, "that may be interrupted."

Ten water distribution sites are being set up in Columbia and Richland

"I think we clearly had an infrastructure challenge two days ago," he said. "We are at a crisis point at this date and I think it is going to take billions of dollars of resources just to bring us back to where we were, which was not a very good place to start with."

Flood warnings remained in effect for the Midlands into Monday night, and other Columbia neighborhoods

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INSIDE

» A graduate of J.L. Mann High School dies in Columbia flood, Page 4A

» Upstate group, business to help flood victims in the Midlands, Page 4A

INSIDE

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County, Haley said, with the first sites opened Monday evening. That could come as a relief to thousands of residents who crowded grocery stores in the morning only to find drinking water sold out.

The Midlands area also accounted for 100 of 550 closed roads and bridges from the storm, with many broken, severed or washed out underneath.

If officials have any concerns about the safety of a road or bridge, it will be closed, Haley said, and some could be closed that are open now as flood waters move downstream into communities.

"If there's a road open now, that doesn't mean it's going to stay open," she said.

Some of those who fought for more road funding earlier this year said the storm damage would push the price tag for eventual repairs much higher.

"We went from a bad situation probably to a worst," said Sen. Ray Cleary, a Georgetown County Republican. "The ice storm two years ago increased the infrastructure cost and the flooding will increase the cost exponentially again. What will the Legislature do?"

Lourie, a Columbia Democrat, said he believes it will take a combination of

local, state and federal resources to address needed repairs.

Haley said a verbal request had been made for a major disaster declaration by the federal government, which would enable federal aid for infrastructure as well as for individuals. The White House announced the declaration Monday evening, which will allow the state to be reimbursed up to 75 percent of the cost of repairs.

Individual assistance can include grants for temporary housing and home repairs, low-cost loans to cover uninsured property losses, and other programs to help individuals and business owners recover from the effects of the disaster, the White House said.

State Acting Transportation Secretary Christy Hall said a request has been made to expedite emergency federal aid to pay for assessments of roads and bridges.

Teams of engineers, some of them from the National Guard and others from neighboring states, are assisting in the effort to assess every road. But Haley cautioned motorists to be patient.

"We're going to do this right," she said. "This is all about safety."

Interstates would have top priority in being returned to service, followed

by primary routes and then secondary routes that connect communities.

The section of I-126 leading into Columbia was being opened Monday, but the section of I-26 over the Saluda River will remain closed until dangers from flood waters ease.

Hall said I-77 is being used to detour traffic from a 70-mile segment of I-95 that has been closed.

Nine South Carolinians have died from the storm as of Monday, five of them drowned in their vehicles, officials said.

Five of the nine deaths came in Richland County, where Sheriff Leon Lott said rescue operations were ongoing. Officials said in addition to evacuations, law enforcement and emergency personnel were going house to house to be sure residents were safe.

Since Haley declared an emergency, the state Department of Public Safety has received almost 2,700 calls for aid, 910 of them for wrecks, officials said Monday.

There have been more than 150 water rescues and 25 aerial rescues from the storm. As of Monday, 26,000 people were without power.

Haley said President Barack Obama telephoned her Monday and sent prayers from him and Michelle Obama.



Title: **DEATH TOLL RISES TO 12 IN SWAMPED CAROLINAS**
 Author: John Bacon @jmbacon USA TODAY
 Size: 76.72 square inch
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DEATH TOLL RISES TO 12 IN SWAMPED CAROLINAS

Hundreds rescued;
roads, bridges closed;
outages plentiful

John Bacon

@jmbacon
USA TODAY

The death toll rose to 10 and millions of South Carolinians remained homebound Monday as state emergency officials grappled with massive flooding following days of historic rains. Authorities also reported two storm-related deaths in North Carolina.

The rain was finally ending late Monday, and sunshine was forecast for Tuesday. But South Carolina remained bloated with floodwaters leaving devastation in their wake.

Rainfall totaling 2 feet in some areas since a state of emergency was declared Thursday has forced hundreds of water rescues.

Gov. Nikki Haley said 550 roads and bridges were closed. About 40,000 residences were without water, and many more were dealing with a boil order.

"We are stronger today than we were yesterday," Haley said at a news conference Monday, adding, "This is not over. Just because the rain stops does not mean that we are out of the woods."

The National Weather Service said rainfall totaling 6.87 inches Sunday in Columbia made it the city's all-time wettest day on record. The two-day rainfall total of 10.44 inches also set a record. The Charleston area set records as well; one suburb (near Mt. Pleas-

ant) had seen more than 2 feet of rain since Thursday.

In Forest Acres, S.C., northeast of Columbia, police on Monday afternoon said the Overcreek Bridge dam had been breached, *The State* reported.

Lt. Curtis Wilson of the Richland County Sheriff's Department said police were conducting mandatory evacuations downstream from the dam. "We are now worried about the Forest Lake dam breaking," said State Sen. Joel Lourie, D-Richland.

Steve Bowen, a meteorologist with the global insurance firm Aon Benfield, said economic losses to the state should "easily surpass \$1 billion given the enormity of the damage."

"The cost to infrastructure alone could be that much," Bowen said in an email to USA TODAY. "Unfortunately, as is the case with flood events, much of the damage will not be covered by insurance since only a small percentage of homeowners in South Carolina are current National Flood Insurance Program policyholders."

Haley said Sunday that this type of rain event can be expected once in 1,000 years.

Hundreds of rescues included a mother and her 15-month-old daughter, plucked from the roof of their home Sunday by a Coast

Guard air crew in Huger, about 25 miles north of Charleston.

Haley said President Obama called her Monday and offered additional assistance.

Much of the East has been saturated by rains that have lingered since Thursday. Coastal areas of North Carolina and Virginia saw flooding, and flood warnings and watches were in effect along much of the East Coast. But the hovering storm saved its worst abuse for South Carolina.

Chris Morris is one of the lucky ones in his Charleston neighborhood. He said his home is on a raised slab and hasn't been breached. He lives on a golf course, but you would not know that by looking at it. "We woke up ... to about 10 inches of water surrounding the house," he told USA TODAY. "The golf course is completely under water."

Contributing: Doyle Rice, Greg Toppo

"We are stronger today than we were yesterday. Our angels in South Carolina continue to be our first responders."

Gov. Nikki Haley

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MLADEN ANTONOV, AFP/GETTY IMAGES



MLADEN ANTONOV, AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Above, flood-displaced residents rest at a temporary shelter at St. Andrews Middle School in Columbia, S.C., on Monday. Relentless rain left large areas of the Southeast under water. At left, the interior of a flooded car in Columbia shows the rain's devastation. Hundreds of roads and bridges were closed.

Title: **Historic flood ravages Midlands**
 Author: BY ANDREW SHAIN ashain@thestate.com
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Historic flood ravages Midlands

Storm drenched Columbia area with more rain than previous three months combined

Rain will linger Monday as crews try to assess damage from flooding

Surges of water closed roads, swelled rivers and creeks and led to one death in Columbia

BY ANDREW SHAIN
 ashain@thestate.com

A slow-moving storm produced historic floods Sunday after dumping more than a foot of rain in parts of Columbia. The rainfall submerged low-lying traffic intersections, washed away roads and flooded homes. Dozens of people needed to be rescued by police and firefighters or were ferried to safety by neighbors in boats. A mother and child were plucked off a rooftop in Richland County by an S.C. National Guard helicopter, state Adjutant General Robert Livingston said.

The deluge also caused several water mains to break in the Columbia water system, forcing many residents to lose service, according to a news release from the city. The worst-hit areas were downtown Columbia and southeast Richland County. Residents may be without service for three to four days, the city said. Meanwhile, water customers with service in Columbia, West Columbia and Blythe-wood were advised to vigorously boil the water for at least a minute before drinking it.

Richland County Sheriff Leon Lott said Sunday that city and county law enforcement, as well as the Columbia Fire Department, pulled hundreds of people out of situations where they were endangered

County: Richland

by rising waters.

“And there likely have been thousands of houses and homes and cars that have had water damage,” Lott said.

While as much as 16.6 inches fell in some areas around Columbia on Sunday, officially more than 10 inches of rain was counted at Columbia Metropolitan Airport on Saturday and Sunday, according to the National Weather Service. That set the 128-year-old record for two days (7.7 inches) and three days (8.4 inches). A single-day record was set on Sunday at almost seven inches.

Some areas around Columbia received as much rain Sunday as the region absorbed in the past three months combined, according to National Weather Service data. Another inch or two of rain was expected overnight.

The effects of the storm will linger Monday as rivers and creeks remain swollen and streets flooded after the record rainfall.

“It’s not over,” Gov. Nikki Haley said. “We’re still in the middle of it.”

On Monday, schools and colleges, including the University of South Carolina, canceled classes. Government offices in Richland and Lexington counties as well

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UPDATES ONLINE

For updated news, including closings, go to **thestate.com**.

Also, while storm conditions and safety considerations may delay Monday delivery of The State in some areas, you can read the news online at **thestate.com** and you can view a replica of the print edition by connecting to **thestate.com/e-edition**.

INSIDE

Your house is flooded?

Now, what do you do? Some tips. **6A**

Lexington County

Residents advised to evacuate from riverbanks as utility opens Lake Murray spillways, **7A**

Closures

Most Midlands schools, governments will be closed Monday, **7A**

FROM PAGE 1A

FLOOD

as Columbia also are closed Monday. Some businesses, such as doctors practices, also plan to close for the day. The Comet bus system in the Columbia area suspended service.

Haley asked South Carolinians to stay off roads so state crews can make repairs to roads and power lines.

"Give us the space that we need," she said.

CURFEWS AND CRESTING RIVERS

After soaking Charleston with what state officials said was a 1,000-year-high two feet of rain since Thursday, the storm shifted northwest Sunday and drenched the Midlands.

More than 16 inches had fallen at Forest Drive and Interstate 77 during Sunday, according to Richland County. More

SEE FLOOD, 10A Richland County

Record rainfall turned normally quiet Gills Creek into a roaring river, **8A**

Forest Acres

Columbia suburb hit hard for second time in a week, this time by rising water, **9A**

South Carolina

Record floods Sunday shut down hundreds of roads statewide, forcing thousands to flee their homes or vehicles, **10A**

GILLS CREEK

(Devine Street near Rosewood Drive)

5.1 FEET

Sunday midnight

14 FEET

Major flood stage

17.1 FEET

Sunday 7 a.m.

9.4 FEET

Previous record from 1997

CONGAREE RIVER IN COLUMBIA

(Near Gervais Street bridge)

13.6 FEET

Sunday midnight

22.8 FEET

Sunday 7 a.m.

30 FEET

Major flood stage:

31.7 FEET

Sunday 6 p.m.

33.3 FEET

Record from 1936

than a foot of rain had fallen in an area stretching from Eastover to Five Points.

The flooding led to curfews in Richland County and much of Lexington County from 6 p.m. Sunday through 6 a.m. Monday.

Lexington County also recommended voluntary evacuations within a quarter mile of the banks of the Saluda and Congaree rivers. SCE&G released water from the Lake Murray Dam, swelling the Saluda, Broad and Congaree rivers.

The Congaree River in Columbia crested past 30 feet for the first time in 79 years.

As the Congaree rose, state transportation officials weighed whether to close the Gervais and Blossom street bridges near downtown Columbia. Those bridges remained open early Sunday night.

Bridges over the Broad River

at Interstate 20 and Interstate 126 were closed Sunday.

The Congaree is not expected to fall below flood stage until late Wednesday night.

ROAD CLOSINGS

State transportation officials said they planned to close low-lying portions of Interstates 20, 26 and 77 around Columbia. Several exits were closed because of flooding under overpasses.

More than 150 roads were closed in Richland and Lexington counties Sunday, according to the S.C. Department of Transportation.

Much of the Columbia flooding came from Gills Creek, and several stores and restaurants around Devine Street and Rosewood Drive were covered by deep water.

The creek nearly doubled its previous record high mark by

Title: **Historic flood ravages Midlands**
 Author: BY ANDREW SHAIN ashain@thestate.com
 Size: 256.83 square inch
 Columbia, SC Circulation: 128564

reaching 17 feet on Sunday. Gills Creek rose a foot in seven hours, according to National Weather Service data.

At least three dams had failed in Richland County by 9 a.m. The Forest Lake, Arcadia Lake and Lake Dogwood dams burst under the pressure of rising waters, Columbia Fire Department spokesman Brick Lewis said. Some of the dam breaks caused flooding in Forest Acres-area neighborhoods.

In Lexington, the Old Mill Pond in the center of downtown overflowed and led to evacuations of homes along 12-Mile Creek.

Lexington received more than eight inches of rain Sunday, according to the National Weather Service.

"Our dirt roads have become drainage ditches," Lexington County Administrator Joe Mer-go said. "We have never seen rain like this in my 22 years."

Emergency shelters were opened to aid those displaced from flooded homes. Richland and Lexington counties opened at least four emergency shelters.

FATALITIES REPORTED

At least four people across the state have died in incidents related to the storm that started late last week.

The latest was a motorist in north Columbia near Sunset Drive, Richland County Coroner Gary Watts said. A woman, whose identity was not released, died Sunday after she was in her SUV for hours caught in rising flood waters, Watts said.

The state remains on full alert with the storm.

President Barack Obama and S.C. Gov. Nikki Haley have declared states of emergency in South Carolina.

To handle the crisis, the S.C. National Guard has activated another 300 service members, bringing the total to about 500,

said Derrec Becker, a spokesman for the S.C. Emergency Management Division.

South Carolina also has requested other states send swift-water rescue teams.

Nine teams are coming from states including West Virginia and Tennessee, Becker said. The Federal Emergency Man-

agement Administration is sending two rescue teams. South Carolina has eight rescue teams.

A Columbia firefighter went missing in the flood but was rescued about an hour later, Lewis said.

The storm knocked out power to about 13,000 S.C. Electric and Gas customers in Richland and Lexington counties. Electric cooperatives in the Midlands reported another 4,000 outages.

Repairs could unfold slowly after the massive storm.

"The roads are making it really, really difficult for us to get to a lot of places to restore power," SCE&G spokeswoman Ginny Jones said.

On Sunday, the heavy rain forced cancellations of church services.

"We couldn't find Noah's Ark in time," the Downtown Church on low-lying Whaley Street told parishioners. "So, church is canceled this morning. Stay safe, and we'll see you next Sunday."

Staff writers John Monk, Clif LeBlanc, Tim Flach, Sammy Fretwell, Jamie Self, Sarah Ellis and Roddie Burris contributed

Rainfall totals

Rainfall totals from midnight-7 p.m. Sunday for select locations around Richland County:

Forest Drive/I-77: 16.6 inches

Spring Valley High School: 14.3 inches

Five Points: 12.1 inches

Eastover: 14 inches

Garners Ferry Road/Pineview: 11.2 inches

Irmo: 10.3 inches

Blythewood High School: 10 inches

SOURCE: Richland County/rcwinds.com

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Department of Natural Resources workers make a rescue in Forest Acres during Sunday morning's flood.

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The Riverwalk near the Gervais Street Bridge is flooded as the river rises. Heavy rains flooded parts of Columbia on Sunday.

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A car was washed from the parking lot at The Lofts at USC into the intersection of Main and Whaley Streets on Sunday.

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 Author: by john monk jmonk@thestate.com
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ACROSS THE STATE

Epic flooding wrecks parts of SC

Four known dead due to weather since rains began Thursday; damage in the millions

Flooding, sinkholes, torrential rain, power outages, water cutoffs, evacuations

BY JOHN MONK

jmonk@thestate.com

Record floods and drenching rainfalls Sunday shut down hundreds of roads and closed stretches of interstates across South Carolina, forcing thousands to flee their homes or vehicles.

At least four people – including a young Columbia woman who was trapped in her car and apparently drowned – were reported to have died in water-related incidents since Thursday.

Numerous bridges over flooding rivers were closed. Rising waters covered streets from the Upstate to Myrtle Beach, Georgetown and Charleston on the coast.

The Columbia area in the Midlands appeared to be one of the hardest-hit areas, and authorities ordered a curfew – from 6 p.m. Sunday to 6 a.m. Monday – in Richland and Lexington counties.

“It’s all going to be bad,” Capt. Robert McCulloch of the S.C. Department of Natural Resources, who said the coast was hard hit, too. “Water flows downhill.”

Across the state, some 12,000 customers were estimated to be without power early Sunday evening, the SCE&G utility reported.

Damages were estimated to run into the millions.

The record rainfall – 18 inches or more in some places over the weekend – was severe enough to close a 75-mile stretch of Interstate 95 between Interstates 20 and 26. The heavily traveled

highway, through the eastern portion of the state, was not closed during 1989’s Hurricane Hugo.

On Saturday, President Obama declared a state of emergency in South Carolina, authorizing federal disaster-relief agencies to spring into action to coordinate relief efforts.

Already, North Carolina has pledged to send helicopters to help South Carolina. Swift-water rescue teams were being brought in from Tennessee and North Carolina’s Fort Bragg.

Meanwhile, small armies of local law enforcement and firefighters, their numbers increased by officers from state agencies including the Department of Natural Resources and the Highway Patrol, scrambled to close roads and evacuate residents trapped in cars and low-lying apartment complexes and homes.

“It’s not as bad as it’s going to get,” predicted state Transportation Department spokesman Pete Poore. “When the waters go down, that’s when all the damage will be revealed.”

Some of that damage will be to the state’s already crumbling roads and bridges.

Across the state, officials announced hundreds of school closings for Monday. All state courts also will be closed.

“We haven’t seen this level of rain in the Lowcountry in a 1,000 years. That’s how big this is,” said Gov. Nikki Haley at a late Sunday afternoon press

conference. “The Congaree River is at its highest level since 1936.”

Across Richland County alone, estimated Sheriff Leon Lott, first responders from the police and fire units pulled “hundreds” of people out of situations where they were endangered by rising waters. Those officers were assisted by citizen volunteers who used their personal boats to rescue people, officials said.

“There likely have been thousands of houses and homes and cars that have had water damage,” Lott said.

In Charleston, rising waters on city streets made sections of some downtown neighborhoods impassable, according to news reports.

In Georgetown, officials stopped traffic from entering the city on U.S. 17 from the north. In Myrtle Beach, dozens of streets remained flooded and closed Sunday afternoon.

In Kershaw County, Sheriff Jim Matthews said, “We’ve got some places where it’s very bad, and there are definitely places where people don’t need to go or they’ll get stuck.”

Among the trouble spots is U.S. 521 near the Sumter-Kershaw county line, where a pond has overflowed onto the road, he said.

Around the Wateree state prison, S.C. 261 is “totally impassable,” Matthews said.

Around the Boykin Mill pond, south of Interstate 20, a dam that holds back the waters in a

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huge pond is in danger of breaking Sunday night, he said.

“If that floods, it will be a massive water issue,” Matthews said. Fortunately, the area below the dam is largely uninhabited, he said.

A countywide curfew is in effect in Kershaw from 7 p.m. Sunday to 7 a.m. Monday, he said.

Questions also remained

about the quality of drinking water in an unknown number of areas.

In Columbia late Sunday afternoon, for example, thousands of people found their taps either produced no water or badly discolored water.

Officials said they did not know when safe drinking water service might be restored, urging

residents to boil any water they got from their taps.

Around Columbia, flood levels on Sunday afternoon caused the state Transportation Department to close two interstate bridges that cross the Broad River – the I-20 bridge west of Dutch Square Mall and the I-126 bridge that is a major Lexington County-Columbia commuter corridor.

Title: **Town halls a boost for Sen. Scott**
 Author: BY MEG KINNARD Associated Press
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Town halls a boost for Sen. Scott

BY MEG KINNARD
Associated Press

COLUMBIA — More than 2,000 voters, from college students to those of retirement age, packed a Columbia theater recently to see for themselves what it's like to experience businessman Donald Trump up close and personal.

The GOP presidential hopeful got an enthusiastic response when he walked on stage Sept. 23, energizing the crowd and cracking jokes about his opponents, the Obama administration and Washington elite.

But the concert hall also erupted when U.S. Sen. Tim Scott, R-S.C., addressed the crowd, amping up the voters and sounding more like a fiery preacher than the soft-spoken

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Town halls a boost for Scott

SCOTT, from A1

politician many have come to know.

"I see a whole lot of Trump out there!" Scott yelled to the audience, bending down and turning his ear toward the roaring crowd. "We're going to have a good night tonight!"

The event, one of more than a dozen town hall meetings Scott has orchestrated with GOP candidates vying for the party's presidential nomination, officially serves to help both Scott and South Carolina's voters decide whom to support. But with South Carolina's other U.S. senator already seeking the nation's highest office, the meetings also serve as a way to elevate Scott's own profile.

The Senate's only black Republican, Scott has commanded attention in his own deliberate, subtle way. He's served in the U.S. Senate since 2013, when, just after his election to a second U.S. House term, he was appointed by Gov. Nikki Haley following the resignation of former U.S. Sen. Jim DeMint.

In a state accustomed to senators like Strom Thurmond and Fritz Hollings serving decades in office, Scott has since been working to introduce himself to voters and bone up on issues in which he's had little experience, such as foreign policy and trade.

He's also been continually running for his own re-election. In 2014, Scott was elected to the remaining two years of DeMint's term, becoming the first black to win a statewide race in South Carolina since the Reconstruction era. Next year, he's on the ballot again, seeking a full, six-year term in a state where around 70 percent of registered voters are white.

Scott announced the candidate forums earlier this year, inviting all the GOP hopefuls for their own hour-long sessions. Even Donald Trump, the GOP front-runner who initially turned down Scott's offer to sit down, ultimately accepted, packing a downtown Columbia theater that seats more than 2,000.

The businessman deferred many times to Scott throughout the session, specifically excluding the senator from his frequent critiques of Washington politicians.

"Other than Tim, we're run by very stupid people," Trump said, the audience erupting in cheers and laughter.

South Carolina GOP Chairman Matt Moore, who previously served as Scott's state director before his election as party leader, said Scott truly wants to help voters learn more about the people vying to be their next president.

"It's not about him," Moore said. "It's a side benefit that his profile is a bit raised, but I don't think he sees it that way at all. He just wants a good, solid Republican to be elected president."

Scott has a high approval rating among South Carolina voters — 83 percent, according to a Winthrop University poll. With his national profile also on the rise since 2012, when the newly minted congressman had a prime-time speaking slot at the Republican National Convention, a political expert says candidates only benefit by being associated with him.

"There's no doubt that every presidential candidate sees it as a good thing to be on stage with Tim Scott," said Scott Huffmon, a political science professor and Winthrop pollster. "But Tim Scott also has to see that this is a good thing for him to highlight his prominence within the party and on the national stage."

Voter Pat Pope said she planned to attend several of the forums, both to see GOP candidates in action and also to learn more about Scott in the process.

"I don't know that much about his platform and what he stands for," said Pope, an 83-year-old retiree. "But I do know that he's highly respected. ... The average person can relate to him."



Scott