

Title: **Gov. Haley urges evacuation**
 Author: BY DEDE BILES dbilesS0aikemstandard. com
 Size: 72.38 column inches
 Aiken, SC Circulation: 19635



Gov. Haley urges evacuation

Schools close, SAHS primary shelter in Aiken County

BY DEDE BILES

dbiles@aikemstandard.com

Wind and rain from Hurricane Matthew are expected in Aiken County later this week, but the biggest impact could come from a huge influx of people seeking refuge from the storm.

S.C. Gov. Nikki Haley declared a state of emergency Tuesday and called for the evacuation of coastal communities. She also ordered school districts and county and state government offices to close in 25 counties, including Aiken and Barnwell, starting today.

Aiken County Administrator Clay Killian, however, questioned that decision.

"Right now, Aiken County Government office are open tomorrow," he said Tuesday night. "We understand that there have been some discussions with the governor about the ambiguity in her order that didn't include municipal governments in the same counties. We understand she is going to issue a clarification in the morning. We will wait and see what that clarification is and then act accordingly."

cordingly."

There won't be any classes at public schools in Aiken County through Friday.

At least one school here will be used as a shelter for evacuees, and more will be available.

The evacuation is scheduled to start at 3 p.m. today if the plan announced Tuesday by Haley doesn't change. She was scheduled to provide an update about the Palmetto State's preparations for Matthew at 9 a.m. today.

More than 1 million South Carolina residents might soon be seeking temporary places to stay.

"We are going to get evacuees from the Hilton Head, Beaufort and Charleston areas," said

Please see **HURRICANE**, Page 12A

INSIDE

SRS closed to all non-essential personnel, **12A**
 Hurricane puts hold on high school football, **2B**

HURRICANE

CONTINUED from 1A

Aiken County Emergency Management Director Paul Matthews. "We will open South Aiken High School first as a shelter, and it will be our primary one. Paul Knox Middle School in North Augusta probably will be No. 2 if we need it, and we could use North Augusta High School if there is an overflow. Silver Bluff High School and Midland Valley High School are other possible shelters that we have identified."

Matthews has been working with American Red Cross and South Carolina Department of Social Services representatives to coordinate the effort.

The Department of Social Services "is responsible in

the state of South Carolina for sheltering, and the Red Cross supplies the personnel for the shelters," Matthews said. "We also need the involvement of law enforcement to provide security at the shelters."

The Aiken County Public School District issued a press release Tuesday stating that any staff members needed to "support our shelter protocol" would be "on call" to help out if necessary. That group included employees in areas such as maintenance, administration, transportation and food services.

USC Aiken planned to hold classes today as scheduled. The school will be providing housing and dining services to

evacuees from the University of South Carolina Beaufort.

As of Tuesday night, Matthew was a Category 4 hurricane. It pounded Haiti before heading toward the eastern tip of Cuba and the Bahamas.

Forecasts showed Matthew eventually moving along the coasts of Florida, Georgia and South Carolina before possibly making landfall in North

Carolina. But those predictions included warnings that there could be deviations in the storm's path.

A chart on the website for the National Weather Service in Columbia showed that parts of Aiken County could get more than an inch of rain from Matthew.

The chance of precipitation is 60 percent for Friday, Friday night and Saturday. It will

drop to 30 percent Saturday night.

There will be breezy conditions Friday and again Friday night. Windy conditions are likely Saturday.

"In Aiken County, there could be some locally heavy rain from some of Matthew's outer rain bands, and there might be just enough wind to take down a few trees and power lines," said Dan Miller, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Columbia.

Dede Biles is a general assignment reporter for the *Aiken Standard* and has been with the newspaper since January 2013. A native of Concord, N.C., she graduated from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Title: **Gov. Haley urges evacuation**
 Author: BY DEDE BILES dbilesS0aikemtandard. com
 Size: 72.38 column inches
 Aiken, SC Circulation: 19635



AP PHOTO/JEFFREY COLLINS

Gov. Nikki Haley announces that she plans to call for the evacuation of about 1 million people from South Carolina's coast.



AP PHOTO/EZEQUIEL ABIU LOPEZ

A sewage worker clears a sewer in a street flooded by the rains of Hurricane Matthew, in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, on Tuesday. Hurricane Matthew roared into the southwestern coast of the island of Hispaniola with devastating storm conditions as it headed north toward Cuba and the eastern coast of Florida.

Title: **Hurricane could alter the Carolina-Georgia game**
 Author: BY PETE IACOBELLI Associated Press
 Size: 102.92 column inches
 Aiken, SC Circulation: 19635



Hurricane could alter the Carolina-Georgia game

BY PETE IACOBELLI

Associated Press

COLUMBIA — With Hurricane Matthew approaching, the South Carolina-Georgia football game is still on for Saturday night, even though Gov. Nikki Haley says she “can’t imagine” the game being played as scheduled.

Several other games in the Palmetto State were affected with Football Championship Subdivision teams Charleston Southern and South Carolina State postponing their Saturday contests. Citadel, another FCS school,

moved its game to the campus of Division II opponent North Greenville and will play

Thursday night instead of Saturday.

But the biggest contest of the weekend is scheduled for Saturday night at Williams-Brice Stadium, where upward of 80,000 fans turn out to watch Southeastern Conference matchups.

South Carolina administrators said Tuesday they were consulting with the SEC, the National Weather Service and local authorities and would make a decision about the game later in the week.

Matthew is a Category 4 storm with winds

up to 145 mph. It is on track to hit South Carolina and potentially disrupt the game at Williams-Brice Stadium.

The storm was about 1,000 miles from Charleston on Tuesday. But forecasters predict the hurricane will move near or along South Carolina’s coast late Friday into early Saturday as a Category 2 storm.

Charleston Southern, located about 20 miles from the coast, canceled several sporting events the rest of the week, including its football game with Albany State. The school

Please see **USC**, Page 2B

USC

CONTINUED from 1B

had pushed the game up to Thursday night before deciding to postpone it.

South Carolina State, an FCS school that’s about an hour’s drive from the coast, postponed its game Saturday against Bethune-Cookman.

Citadel shuffled its game to Tigerville, home of North Greenville, some 230 miles northwest of the Bulldogs’ home in Charleston.

South Carolina announced it has canceled classes at its main campus for today and anticipated remaining closed

Thursday and Friday.

If South Carolina’s game is changed or delayed, it would be the second straight season that weather has altered the Gamecocks’ football season. Last year’s deadly flooding after a weekend of unprecedented rain led the university to move a home game with LSU to Baton Rouge, Louisiana, in part because many of the state troopers and safety officials necessary to hold a home football game were taking part in cleanup and recovery duties.

A similar situation might occur if Matthew hits South Carolina.

Haley said Tuesday that the ultimate call on whether to play the game would be made by the schools and the SEC.

“As of now, I can’t imagine that happening, but certainly we’re going to continue to watch this,” she said. “I would love nothing more than to see this take a right-hand turn and go out to sea.”

South Carolina coach Will Muschamp said he’s not involved in planning for the storm because he’s too busy looking into how to slow down Georgia’s offense.

“Our administration is handling all of that through the

SEC office,” he said. “All of my energy is game planning for the game. Whatever happens happens. I’m not the least bit worried about it.”

No. 3 Clemson is on the road this week, playing Friday night at Boston College. The Tigers are scheduled to leave Thursday and should miss any potentially bad weather.

The only other FCS game scheduled for Saturday in the Palmetto State was Furman hosting Samford in Greenville, far from the coastal areas where the storm’s heaviest impacts are expected.

Title: **Hurricane could alter the Carolina-Georgia game**
Author: BY PETE IACOBELLI Associated Press
Size: 102.92 column inches
Aiken, SC Circulation: 19635



ARTIE WALKER/SPECIAL TO THE AIKEN STANDARD

Texas A&M Aggies linebacker Otaro Alaka holds on to the leg of South Carolina Gamecocks running back Rico Dowdle to prevent any more yards gained. The Gamecocks' home game against Georgia could be affected by Hurricane Matthew.

Title: **October flood damage apparent one year later**
 Author: BY DAN BROWN dbrown@aikenstandard.com
 Size: 119.04 column inches
 Aiken, SC Circulation: 19635



October flood damage apparent one year later

Farmers' resiliency following floods inspires local pastor

BY DAN BROWN

dbrown@aikenstandard.com

It has been a long, hard year for the people of rural Aiken County.

The epic floods of Oct. 3, 4 and 5 of 2015 knocked the rural county residents to their knees with some parts of northern and eastern Aiken County still feeling the effects last year's storms even today.

The 20-plus inches that fell in parts of Aiken County washed out roads and bridges, burst dams and permanently altered the rolling landscape of the county's farming community.

In the months that followed, gov-

ernment relief was slow in coming, if at all, and some farmers were forced to sell off equipment to make ends meet.

Despite their hardship, these farming communities persevered and shouldered onward, as this is what farmers do, said Pastor Butch Blackwell of Clinton United Methodist Church in Salley.

"They inspire me on a daily basis," Blackwell said. "This is a model community where people roll up their sleeves and help each other, without question. Difference in race, religion or political affilia-

tion, none of that matters to farmers. We are all neighbors here. We are family."

Immediately after the storms hit, Blackwell said, the community came together, not because there was a storm, but because in a farming community, people come together during difficult times and help each other out.

"Farmers are extraordinarily resilient people," he said. "When it's dry and their crops don't come in, they turn the dirt over. When it rains and it washes the crops away, they plant again. These are salt of the earth

folks. After a year of economic challenges for farmers and those residents in the area that suffered damage to their homes, spirits have remained high. People have come together."

Old Shoals Road still closed for bridge repair

The S.C. Department of Transportation expects a portion of Old Shoals Road to open back up

Please see **FLOOD**, Page 10A

FLOOD

CONTINUED from 1A

by the end of October after last year's floods wiped out a connecting bridge, the last Aiken County bridge to remain closed due to rain and flood damage from the storm.

In a flood update published in September, the SCDOT said

Old Shoals Road from U.S. 1 to Mount Pleasant Road is still under construction for bridge replacement.

Nearly 400 roads were closed and more than 170 bridges were closed statewide due to the Oct. 3 to 5 storms.

Old Shoals Road is expected to open by Oct. 31.

Governor denies helping hand

This summer, the S.C. Department of Agriculture tried to do what S.C. Gov. Nikki Haley would not – give state farmers a helping hand.

Haley said following the statewide flooding, farm-

ers would not be treated any differently than other state businesses, which according to Hollow Creek Fire Chief Glenn Poole, missed the point entirely.

"Farming is a different business than a hardware or sporting goods store," he said. "The farmers aren't looking for any handouts. That is not in their

Title: **October lood damage apparent one year later**
 Author: BY DAN BROWN dbrown@aikenstatidard. com
 Size: 119.04 column inches
 Aiken, SC Circulation: 19635

mind-set. Farmers understand work. Farmers wrote the book on hard work, and it is on their backs that this country was built.”

Agribusiness is the state’s largest industry.

Legislature OKs aid

Farmers who suffered crop loss due to last year’s flooding were able to apply for South Carolina Farm Aid grants from the S.C. Department of Agriculture.

In July, the S.C. General Assembly approved \$40 million in state aid to help farms in flood-ravaged communities.

According to the Agriculture Department, the farm aid for Aiken County totaled 20 individual farmers who received

\$370,000 covering 5,307 flooded acres.

“The historic flood that hit South Carolina devastated many of the small farms across the rural areas of our state,” Agriculture Commissioner Hugh Weathers said this summer. “While this won’t make our farmers whole, we hope through this relief funding, they can begin to recover.”

S.C. District 86 Rep. Bill Taylor, whose district includes the region of Aiken County hardest hit by the October storms, said the \$40 million in flood aid allocated by the state legislature had been a life-saver for small, family farmers.

“I have heard from Aiken County farmers who told me the state assistance is what kept them going,” he said. “It was a

lifeline for farmers, not a bail-out.”

Eligible farmers received grants covering only 20 percent of their verified crop loss up to \$100,000, Taylor said. Farmers also had to prove they were going to continue farming, “because we weren’t offering financial parachutes to those leaving farming,” he said.

Knowing the assistance was coming, farmers were able to use their faith in the legislature to extend their credit to purchase seeds and fertilizer to plant their current crops, Taylor said.

One farmer said he received his check on Saturday and spent it on Monday, according to Taylor.

comes together

The storms of a year ago may have knocked farmers down, but not out.

Blackwell said church membership had grown since the October storms and flooding, and more people are coming to church on Sundays.

“It has been a privilege to be here to witness the strength and resiliency of these people,” he said. “I am inspired by their strength and their spirit on a daily basis.”

Dan Brown is the city government reporter for the *Aiken Standard*.

Local community



STAFF FILE PHOTO BY CHRISTINA CLEVELAND

Clint Brown, of the Wagener-Salley area, said he experienced a total 200-acre loss of cotton due to last year’s flooding. Local Aiken County farmers are still feel the impact of last year’s historic flooding.

Title: **October lood damage apparent one year later**
Author: BY DAN BROWN dbrown@aikenstatidard.com
Size: 119.04 column inches
Aiken, SC Circulation: 19635



SUBMITTED FILE PHOTO BY BO DUBOSE

A portion of Cumbee Trail Road collapsed after heavy amounts of flooding in October 2015.



STAFF PHOTO BY DAN BROWN

The Old Shoals Road bridge remains closed a year after the epic rain and resulting floods hammered eastern and northern Aiken County. More than 40 roads and a half dozen bridges were closed due to flooding and water damage.