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Date: 10/16/2015 4:15:51 PM

Subject: 10.16.15 Media Monitoring Clips for DR-4241-SC Afternoon

NEWS CLIPS
SOUTH CAROLINA-DR-4241
10/16/15
Afternoon



Issues:

- None.

Summary:

- Charleston County moves back to normal operations.
- Recovery center opens in North Charleston
- Myrtle Beach TV reporter finds woman who says her home is still under water, she's received no help says "Nobody cares."
- FEMA will attend "Pig Pickin' Festival" in Kingstree
- DNR: Stay off the water; waves damage homes and you'll be suspected of looting
- Flood brings home the challenges of damage imminent from rising sea levels
- Pawley's Island dunes eroded down 6 to 18 feet
- Farmers determining if fall crops are salvageable
- Lexington brewery suffered mightily from dam breach and is closed
- Red Cross helps with emotional toll from flood
- Beaufort County not hit by flood disaster, but has to contend with losses anyway, due to tourists' misperception that it can't welcome them
- Aiken County reopens roads
- Counties continue to schedule debris pick-up
- Richland schools announce scheduling for next week: slight delays
- SC forests suffered an estimated \$65 million in damages
- FEMA DRCs open all weekend
- Fundraisers and other charitable drives multiplying

Analysis:

- Media coverage continues to be dominated by how the local governments and residents are coping with the flood aftermath and post-flood issues. Mentions of FEMA are neutral.

Social Listening Analysis:

- **FEMA.** Discussions about FEMA and South Carolina are minimal, with mentions being focused on counties receiving disaster declarations. A reporter posted on social media [about two disaster recovery center openings](#), which was shared two times.
- **Community.** Discussions on community relief/recovery facebook pages and groups [are positive, and](#)

are addressing individual need requests and coordination and the numbers of people liking and sharing posts on these group and community pages are growing fast. The public is also still [sharing the message to contact FEMA](#) when several tweets about survivors ask questions on the community facebook flood relief pages.

Private sector. A local news station received several responses on its tweet about a news story on [Sam's Club and Tyson Foods](#) providing free meals and food distribution through Sunday in Columbia, and [there are several posts](#) about the Tide "Loads of Hope" free laundry service in Summerville.

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

Floods

[Normal Operations: Charleston County moves back to OPCON 5 after flood disaster](#)

[Flood recovery center opens in North Charleston](#)

[Flood victims still waiting for help](#)

[FEMA reps to attend Kingstree Pig Pickin' Festival](#)

[Horry County students collect items to "Fill the Bus" and deliver to Georgetown students impacted by flooding](#)

[DNR urges you to stay off the water](#)

[New sea-rise study projects long-term loss for Charleston](#)

[SCDOT flood debris pick-up in Dorchester County on Thursday](#)

[Williamsburg County has closed all shelters](#)

[Georgetown flooding debris to be picked up Friday](#)

[Latest flood update for Columbia, Richland County](#)

[Florence dealership helps church aiding in flood relief](#)

[U.S. 601 in Calhoun County closed again due to 'asphalt deterioration'](#)

[You can help flood victims](#)

[Pawleys Island experiences severe sand dune erosion](#)

[SCDOT reopens Trenholm Road in Forest Acres](#)

[SC Budget Panel To Assess "Floodmagedon"](#)

[Southerners take care of their own](#)

[What the storm means for local farmers and how you can help](#)

[Old Mill Brewpub Rebuilding/The Beer Community Cares](#)

[Creekside, Brewpub making quick comeback](#)

[Cayce officers rescue 2 men from flood waters](#)

[West Cola firefighters brave rushing water, save woman](#)

[Red Cross also helps with emotional fallout from flood](#)

[Beaufort County scrambles to salvage tourism hit from flood misperception](#)

[Latest: 10 roads reopen as repairs make progress](#)

[Florence County approved for public assistance](#)

[Surfside Beach gets good news on flood insurance](#)

[Lowcountry Biz Boil: Someone tell Al Roker it's OK to smile when you visit S.C.](#)

[City Manager Teresa Wilson addresses city employee concerns about time off during flood](#)

[How to donate items for Colleton County flood victims](#)

[Richland 1, Richland 2 to Operate on Small Delay Next Week](#)

[A fork in the road](#)

[South Carolina to collect flood donations at Vanderbilt game](#)

[USC to coordinate donations for flood relief at Saturday's game](#)

[Forestry officials estimate flood losses at \\$65 million](#)

[Why you didn't see Mount Pleasant's mayor on CNN](#)

[FEMA Disaster Recovery Centers remain open over the weekend](#)

[Train Traffic Through Fort Mill to Double](#)

[AAA Carolinas warns car-buyers of flood damaged vehicles for sale](#)

[SCHUYLER KROPF: Floods an opportunity for road reform, environmental advocacy says](#)

[Bluffton businesses, volunteers continue to help with flood relief](#)

[OPINION: Let's not be lulled once again into ignoring the awesome might of Mother Nature](#)

[OPINION: Lawmakers need to know situation before they return](#)

Floods

Normal Operations: Charleston County moves back to OPCON 5 after flood disaster

By Suzelle Santos

CBS 5 WCSC Charleston, Oct. 16, 2015

CHARLESTON COUNTY, SC (WCSC) -

Charleston County Government's Emergency Operations Center moved to OPCON 5 status at 5:00 p.m. Thursday, a news release says.

This movement means they are now at normal day-to-day operations after record-breaking flooding in October.

A news release from the county says they will continue to help coordinate volunteers and donations through the Citizens Information Line at 843-746-3900. They say the line will not be staffed, but will provide an opportunity to leave a message and staff will respond in a timely manner.

Charleston County crews will continue with debris removal in the City of Charleston, Isle of Palms, Johns Island and additional areas as needed this week.

As of Wednesday, crews have picked up 62 truckloads or more than 3,200 cubic yards of debris.

Officials say you should not put debris material in black bags. The items will not be picked up as debris since it cannot be seen and looks like normal municipal waste.

If possible, household hazardous waste should be taken to County Convenience Sites for disposal rather than left at the curb.

They ask that you avoid placing debris near utilities along the road.

Early registration is open for the State of South Carolina for flood damage, according to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Visit the FEMA website listed below and apply online to start your application: <http://www.disasterassistance.gov>. You can also call 800-621-3362.

Those without Internet access should note that the Charleston County Public Libraries have computers with Internet access that can be used.

All library branches are operating on a normal schedule except the Poe Branch on Sullivan's Island. Cleanup and repair will continue this week and the branch is expected to reopen Monday.

Flood recovery center opens in North Charleston

By Dave Munday

Charleston Post and Courier, Oct 16 12:46 pm

A disaster recovery center for flood victims has opened in North Charleston.

The center will be open every day from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. at the Charleston County Public Works building at 5800 Casper Padgett Way.

Federal disaster assistance can include money for temporary rental assistance and essential home repairs for primary residences not covered by insurance, according to an announcement from the governor's office.

Representatives from the S.C. Emergency Management Division, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Small Business Administration and other agencies will be available to explain disaster assistance programs and help survivors apply for aid.

Those needing help are advised to register with FEMA in advance at DisasterAssistance.gov or by calling 800-621-3362 from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. Those with hearing or speech disabilities and use a TTY can call 800-462-7585. Those who use 711 or VRS (Video Relay Service) or require accommodations while visiting a center can call 800-621-3362.

Those without Internet access can access computers at public libraries. All Charleston County library branches are back to a normal schedule except the Edgar Allen Poe Branch on Sullivan's Island, which is expected to reopen Monday.

Low-interest disaster loans from the Small Business Administration are also available for homeowner, renter and business uninsured losses. Applicants should first register with FEMA and can get more information on SBA disaster loans at SBA.gov or 800-659-2955 800-877-8339 for people with hearing problems. They may also apply online at

disasterloan.sba.gov/ela.

Charleston County will continue to coordinate volunteers and donations through the Citizens Information Line. Callers are asked to leave a message at 843-746-3900.

Charleston County crews will continue this week with yard and construction debris removal in the Charleston and on the Isle of Palms and Johns Island, Debris should not be put in black bags, and hazardous waste should be taken to county convenience sites.

Flood victims still waiting for help

By Conor McCue

[WMBF](#), Myrtle Beach, Oct 15, 2015 10:48 PM EDT

CONWAY, SC (WMBF) - It's been days since flooding stopped, but around Horry County many homeowners haven't stopped needing help.

For the folks off New Road in Conway, the past few days haven't gotten any easier.

"I went back there a few days ago in the boat," said Elaine Diaz. "I basically have lost everything."

Diaz now has nowhere to go. Her home is underwater, and this truck is one of her few belongings left.

One thing she says she and her neighborhood need the most right now is help.

"A mile down the road they've got Red Cross, Salvation Army, National Guard," she said. "Where New Road is, on my end, there has been nothing."

That help she's referring to is at checkpoints like the one off Waccamaw Drive. There are currently more than a dozen around Horry County, and a few more within the Conway city limits.

The county spokesperson says each one is strategically placed next to a river, body of water, or closed road.

Their purpose is only to prevent looting and sightseeing.

Some do have things like water available, but those supplies are coming from outside organizations like the Red Cross.

"It's just sad," said Diaz. "It feels like nobody cares about us on New Road."

Diaz and her neighbors still feel under appreciated. They hope someone will see the conditions of their neighborhood, and help a little too.

"I come down here and I look at the water and miss my home so much," she said while weeping. "I want to go home but I can't go home."

If you need more assistance than just those checkpoints, there are many resources available.

The county has two Disaster Recovery Centers open with supplies and organizations to help you. Those are at the North Strand Rec Center and South Strand Rec Center.

You can also call the number 211 to get in touch with the United Way.

FEMA reps to attend Kingstree Pig Pickin' Festival

By Nicole Boone

[CBS 13 WBTW](#) Myrtle Beach, October 16, 2015

Kingstree, SC – Williamsburg County Government Officials have announced FEMA representatives will be at the annual "Pig Pickin Festival" in Kingstree, Saturday, October 17. FEMA Representatives will have a booth setup helping people register for FEMA assistance. FEMA registration will be from 10:00 am until 9:00 pm.

Horry County students collect items to "Fill the Bus" and deliver to Georgetown students impacted by flooding

By Nicole Boone

[CBS 13 WBTW](#) Myrtle Beach, October 16, 2015

Murrells Inlet, SC – Students at St. James High School in Horry County are reaching out to help students impacted by the flooding in Georgetown County. The Georgetown Schools are struggling to assist their students and community as they recover from the flood. As a result, Saint James High School has "adopted" three schools in the Georgetown School District: Carvers Bay High School, Rosemary Middle, and Andrews Primary. The school's goal is to "Fill the Bus" with as much as it can to help Georgetown students rebuild their schools, homes, and community. Currently, the items needed most are:

Foam cups/bowls, plates, and napkins

Toilet paper, Paper Towels, and Plastic cutlery

Cleaning gloves and sponges

Bath/hand towels and wash clothes

Soup/ canned goods

Mac and Cheese
Cereal
Deodorant, tooth brushes and toothpaste
Hand soap and Shampoo
Bleach
Laundry detergent
Water
Socks, Blankets, and Clothes

The goal is to fill the bus and deliver the items on Monday, October 26. If you would like to help contact St. James High School at 843-650-5600.

DNR urges you to stay off the water

By Jenna DeAngelis

[WMBF](#), Myrtle Beach, Oct 15, 2015

CONWAY, SC (WMBF) - We finally have a weekend of sunshine, which means you may want to hit the water, but think again because local agencies are urging you stay off the flooded rivers.

If anyone's familiar with the impact of the flood, it's the Department of Natural Resources. Since the storm first hit, DNR has been revving up crews on the water, checking in on the victims, helping and protecting them.

"We're patrolling areas making sure anyone that's traveling on the waterway or the river is maintaining an idle speed to protect these homes," said DNR First Sergeant Nate Hutson.

DNR along with Horry County Police, SLED, and the Coast Guard, are trying to keep recreational boaters off the water during the flood.

"Stay away from Socastee, stay off the Waccamaw, don't be out there unless you absolutely have to," Sergeant Hutson said.

If you are out, they may stop you to find out why.

"Talk to them about what kind of business they have in that neighborhood," he said. "Making sure they live there, and they're not just causing trouble or trying to get in these folks homes when they're not there."

It goes way beyond looting; keeping boats off the water could salvage many homes on the verge of destruction. All it takes is a little boat power, to cause a lot of damage, especially to homes which have water inches away from coming into the house.

"One of those stilts could be just on the verge of breaking and a good enough wave may cause it to collapse and there may be people inside," Sergeant Hutson said.

Plus, staying off the river will help keep boaters safe from debris or an injury too.

Before you hook up your boat and trailer, think about the people who won't be able to look at their homes for weeks.

"This is their home, they work hard for these places, " Sergeant Hutson said. "Don't take advantage of these people's misfortune."

DNR, Horry County Police, SLED and the U.S. Coast Guard will continue to heavily patrol the water until it starts to go down, which could be weeks from now.

New sea-rise study projects long-term loss for Charleston

Immediate cuts in carbon emissions key to saving city

By Dustin Waters

[Charleston City Paper](#), Oct 15, 2015 at 11:54 AM

Tidal flooding already plagues many portions of Charleston. - DUSTIN WATERS Dustin Waters

Tidal flooding already plagues many portions of Charleston.

Just when Charleston was beginning to dry off, a new study finds that the much of the city could be lost to sea-level rise unless carbon emissions are dramatically cut.

The study published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences examined the long-term effects of carbon emissions as they contribute to rising seas and what that means for coastal cities and towns. According to researchers, unabated carbon emissions up to the year 2100 would commit the planet to an eventual sea-level rise of 15-32 feet, affecting the homes of more than 20 million people in the U.S. Left unchecked, sea-level rise would one day claim most of West Ashley, Mt. Pleasant, and the Charleston peninsula as far north as Remount Road in North Charleston.

For 25 percent of Charleston's populated land mass, the city has already passed the point of no return. Historical emissions have exceeded the critical level, and a quarter of residents' homes will eventually fall below the future high-

tide line as the sea level rises by more than five feet. Although the outlook seems grim, researchers say that immediate cuts in carbon emissions could help preserve or at the very least lengthen the lifespan of much of the city.

“If we continue on the path that we’re on now, our research indicates that the entire city could be underwater, locked-in to becoming underwater in the long run,” says the study’s lead author, Dr. Benjamin Strauss. “I want to be very clear that I’m not talking about something that’s going to happen in 50 or even 100 years, but instead I’m talking about our carbon emissions over the next 50 to 100 years could mean that eventually Charleston would be well below sea level. Charleston is a historic city. There are important things in Charleston that are hundreds of years old. If we want to preserve those things for hundreds of more years, our research indicates the only way to do that is through extreme carbon cuts.”

If carbon emissions continue to climb throughout the 21st century, Charleston will be locked in to an eventual sea-level rise of almost eight feet, leading to the loss of half the city. An immediate reduction in emissions could preserve the remainder of Charleston.

“In Charleston, land beneath half the population could avoid submergence with extreme carbon cuts. That’s a really big difference, more than 50,000 people,” says Strauss. “But even in the best-case carbon emissions scenario, Charleston faces a grave threat. Local sea level is going to continue to rise for a long time and it’s going to pose great challenges.”

While the study’s projections focus on the long-term effects of rising oceans, now is the time for cities facing eventual sea-level rise to prepare for the inevitable. Unfortunately, the City of Charleston and Charleston County have done little to address this growing threat in their plans for the future. For Strauss, the solution is evident: cut carbon emissions immediately or risk the loss of Charleston for future generations.

“Some of the coverage of this study says that this city is going to be underwater in 2100,” says Strauss. “I want to be very clear, that’s not what the paper says. But it does say that we’re on a pathway where we’ve already committed to serious problems for cities like Charleston and we’re locking into those future problems worse and worse the more we emit.”

SCDOT flood debris pick-up in Dorchester County on Thursday

U.S. 601 in Calhoun County closed again due to 'asphalt deterioration'

[Times and Democrat, Oct 14, 2015](#)

U.S. 601 in Calhoun County was closed again Wednesday afternoon due to "asphalt deterioration," according to the South Carolina Department of Transportation.

The road is closed at the same spot where it sustained storm damage related to the recent flooding.

Roads remaining closed Wednesday in Calhoun County include Church Camp Road and Tynah Road, according to the SCDOT.

S.C. 267 (McCords Ferry Road) was open Wednesday evening, the SCDOT reported.

Roads still closed in Orangeburg County Wednesday evening included Bonner Avenue from U.S. 15 to U.S. 301 near Santee, Cleveland Street near Elloree, Rocks Pond in Eutawville, Old Number Six Highway from Garden Gate Road to S-38-138 and St. Julien Drive in Eutawville.

No SCDOT-maintained roads were reported to be closed in Bamberg County on Wednesday.

Williamsburg County has closed all shelters

By News Release

[WCB News 2, October 15, 2015](#)

On October 15, 2015 The Williamsburg County Government Officials have announced all shelters are currently closed.

FEMA representatives are urging citizens to take pictures of any damages endured during the recent flood.

This will assist FEMA representatives with filing your claim as the repair process begins.

FEMA representatives will be traveling in teams throughout the county registering citizens impacted by the flood.

Citizens needing to contact FEMA can use the following phone number 1-800-621-3362, or via internet www.disasterassistance.gov/.

Georgetown flooding debris to be picked up Friday

[WBTW, Oct. 15, 2015](#)

COLUMBIA, SC (WBTW) – Contractors working for the South Carolina Department of Transportation to pick up flooding debris are working in Georgetown County Friday.

Property owners are reminded to separate debris into the categories illustrated in the above chart. Also note that

contractors are collecting debris by category, so not all debris may be taken away at one time. Contractors will make return trips to gather the categorized items.

Crews were in four other South Carolina counties Thursday collecting flood trash.

Dorchester County – Debris pickups along Harrison in the Tranquil Estates neighborhood, moving to the Summerwood subdivision.

Lexington County – Debris clean-up in the Pine Glen, Nottingham, Wilton Gate and Bishop Gate neighborhoods.

Richland County – Debris removal on Timberline Drive in the Gill's Creek area.

Sumter County – Crews will be picking up in the Bay Blossom, Tudor Place and areas south of Iris Garden in the city of Sumter.

Latest flood update for Columbia, Richland County

By Matthew Stevens, T

WACH Fox 57 Thursday, October 15 2015

RICHLAND COUNTY, SC (WACH) - The City of Columbia has announced that two intersections in the city have been reopened Thursday.

North Main Street at Earlewood Park and Rosewood Rive at Devine Street both have been reopened.

The City also announced a Boil Water Advisory for Kay Street residents, from St. Andrews Road to Sandy Springs Court.

This should be only a temporary advisory as the Water Works Department is fixing a 24 inch line repair that was caused by flooding.

Richland County officials announced that water distribution sites will remain open through the weekend at Lower Richland High School and Mt. Pleasant United Methodist Church.

DHEC will be at St. Andrews Park Saturday, providing free tetanus shots to in need of one.

The county is also reminding citizens that two Disaster Recovery Centers are open from 8am to 7pm, seven days a week at Richland Library Southeast and Richland Library Eastover.

For the most up-to-date information on flood relief information, visit www.rcgov.us.

Florence dealership helps church aiding in flood relief

BY SHAMIRA McCRAY

Florence Morning News, October 15, 2015

FLORENCE, S.C. -- The House of God – Keith Dominion headquarters in Nashville, Tennessee, donated 100 cases of water to its South Carolina churches that were affected by a flood earlier this month.

William Cokley, a member of The House of God in Florence, said the water was sent to Charleston because roads were blocked in Florence at the time. The House of God has locations in Kingstree, Hemmingway, Sumter and surrounding areas, Cokley said.

The headquarters wanted to do something to provide relief due to there not being any water in Kingstree, he said.

“So, the water was sent to our state church in Charleston, S.C., and we didn't have any transportation, any way to get a hundred cases of water to Florence,” he said.

Cokley said he went to Mike Reichenbach Ford Lincoln earlier in the week and spoke with sales manager James Welch. He explained to Welch that the church needed transportation large enough to go to Charleston and get 100 cases of water.

“So James went out and looked at a couple of trucks. He said, ‘No, that's not what I want to do. I can do better than that,’” Cokley said. “So he went out and found a 2015 Ford Transit Connect cargo van.”

Welch handed the keys over, according to Cokley, and told him to bring it back whenever the church was done with the water distribution.

“He put a tag on the back, and that was it,” Cokley said. “And I think that was very, very kind of him.”

Cokley said representatives from Mike Reichenbach Ford Lincoln were kind enough to pick the van up from the church after they were finished.

Senior sales representative Henry Eldridge said that whenever there is a disaster, the dealership likes to chip in to make things easier in the community.

“He came to one of the managers early in the week, and they said what they were trying to do to help as far as distribution of water in the community,” Eldridge said. “Right then and there, we quickly agreed to help out.”

Eldridge said the dealership likes to take part in the small things because the community helps the business.

The overall experience with Mike Reichenbach Ford Lincoln was a good one, Cokley said.

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[Times and Democrat](#), Oct 14, 2015

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No SCDOT-maintained roads were reported to be closed in Bamberg County on Wednesday.

You can help flood victims

[The Sumter Item](#), October 15, 2015

To help the public know of more ways it can help flood victims, The Sumter Item will list fundraisers and places to donate money, food or clothing.

Here's what we have so far:

There will be a Sumter Relief Effort Charity Car Wash on Saturday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Advance Auto Parts, 510 Broad St. All of the proceeds from the event will go to helping families in the Sumter community. Organizers say they plan to use 100 percent of the money raised to buy gift cards from Walmart, Kmart, Target and Lowe's and gift certificates to buy furniture. For more information, contact Donnetta Huggins at (803) 521-9872.

A special statewide fund has been established to assist students in school districts affected by flooding in South Carolina and can be viewed at floodreliefforschools.org. The South Carolina School Boards Association and South Carolina Future Minds announced Monday that money collected will be distributed to school districts in counties designated for federal assistance by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. As of Wednesday, 36 school districts in 19 counties in South Carolina had been designated for federal assistance by the FEMA; those include school districts in Clarendon, Lee and Sumter counties. Trip DuBard, executive director of SC Future Minds, said there are a couple of ways individuals, organizations and schools can contribute. Go to www.floodreliefforschools.org or text "SCSchools" to 71777.

All proceeds from the Sumter Clarendon Chapter of the Building Industry Association Golf Tournament will benefit the United Way of Sumter, Clarendon and Lee Counties Flood Relief Fund, to be held Nov. 2 at Beech Creek Golf Club. For sponsorship opportunities and to register, call Nelle Tomlinson (803) 775-6800.

The BlueCross BlueShield of South Carolina Foundation and BlueCross BlueShield of South Carolina have made available \$1 million to South Carolina nonprofit organizations assisting state residents affected by catastrophic flooding. South Carolina-based 501(c)(3) organizations that are providing disaster-related services to residents of affected counties may apply. Projects that may be funded include activities supporting the health and human services of those affected by this natural disaster. Interested nonprofit organizations should contact BlueCross BlueShield of South Carolina Foundation at (803) 264-7860 (Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.) or email FLOOD.RELIEF@bcbsc.com for additional information and to determine eligibility. A simple application process has been developed to provide organizations with money to give help and to offer hope to those most in need.

South State Bank has established the South State Bank Emergency Relief Fund, with an initial contribution of \$100,000, to provide financial support to the communities it serves. The South State Bank Emergency Relief Fund is operated by Central Carolina Community Foundation, and 100 percent of all donations will support the flood relief efforts. In addition to the initial contribution, individuals and organizations can also donate in support of affected communities. Money will be available through local nonprofit organizations providing assistance to flood victims in these counties: Florence, Orangeburg, Richland and Sumter. The bank does not have branches in Clarendon and Lee counties. For more information on how to make a donation or apply for assistance, visit www.SouthStateBank.com/EmergencyRelief.

Sumter United Ministries, 36 S. Artillery Drive, is looking to collect items that can be part of a "Flood Bucket" that will aid in the cleanup process. Requested items include: 5-gallon buckets; liquid cleaner, 12-16 ounces; dish soap; anti-bacterial air freshener; insect repellent spray; scrub brushes; cleaning wipes; sponges; scouring pads; heavy-duty trash bags; dust masks; kitchen dishwashing gloves; work gloves; and empty spray bottles. For more information, call (803) 775-0757.

SAFE Federal Credit Union branches (<https://www.safefed.org/branches-atms>) will serve as drop-off locations for Midlands residents who want to help in the relief efforts. Monetary and nonperishable donations can be dropped off at

any SAFE branch through Friday. All proceeds and donated items will be distributed to local nonprofit organizations within the eight counties served by SAFE. These organizations include Harvest Hope Food Bank in Clarendon, Richland, Lexington, Orangeburg and Florence counties; Sumter United Ministries in Sumter County; Good Samaritans for All People in Lee County; and Food for the Soul in Kershaw County. SAFE Federal Credit Union locations are open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday to accept nonperishable food items and monetary gifts. Items to consider donating include canned meat, fruit or vegetables, sports drinks, baby formula, plastic grocery bags, suitcases and bottled water. Clothing cannot be accepted at these locations. All proceeds will be distributed to local nonprofits. For a complete list of items accepted, visit safefed.org.

The Red Cross is accepting financial donations. Visit redcross.org, call 1-800-RED CROSS or text REDCROSS to 90999 to make a \$10 donation. Your donation helps provide food, shelter and emotional support to those affected by disasters. The Red Cross accepts large, bulk donations of new items if they are suitable to the needs of a specific disaster. It does not accept small quantities or collections of new or used products, such as household goods, clothing or food. The Red Cross works closely with local community groups and organizations that do accept in-kind donations. Visit nvoad.org for a list of organizations accepting in-kind donations.

Donate to Harvest Hope Food Bank to help displaced families who need food. Visit <https://donate.harvesthope.org/>.

Donate to The Salvation Army which is providing food, water and shelter to flood victims. Text STORM to 51555.

Volunteer to distribute water and food through United Way. Visit <http://bit.ly/1Q7HfDc>.

United Way of Sumter, Clarendon and Lee Counties has a Flood Relief Fund that will directly benefit the people, families and organizations affected by this crisis. All money will stay within Sumter, Clarendon and Lee counties. A webpage with volunteer opportunities, donation sites, distribution sites and needs for the communities has been established at <http://www.uwaysumter.org/flood-relief-information>. Organizations collecting or distributing can contact United Way at (803) 773-7935 or anorris@uwaysumter.org to have their organization added to the list. It will be updated.

If you know of events organized for donations or fundraisers, send the information to rick@theitem.com, and it will be added to the list.

Pawleys Island experiences severe sand dune erosion

By Samaria Terry

WMBF, Myrtle Beach, Oct 16, 2015

PAWLEYS ISLAND, SC (WMBF) – In some areas on the beaches in Pawleys Island, the dunes had completely eroded away. Town officials met with FEMA to show them the seriousness of the erosion.

Pawleys Island Officials said they met with FEMA Wednesday as they toured Georgetown County. They showed FEMA a few areas that were hit bad, including the spot where we conducted the interview. Their goal was to outline the seriousness of the erosion and the potential of the loss of structures if another storm hits.

Mayor Bill Otis says he doesn't know how much it will cost to repair the beach but he says it's absolutely in the millions just for Pawleys Island. He says engineers from Coastal Carolina University will need to determine how much sand was lost from Pawleys Island as well as all the beaches in Georgetown County. He says that by next week they should have some pretty firm numbers.

"The main issue now is to protect structures and put this back the way it was prior to the storm," said Mayor Otis.

He said FEMA gathered information, and he feels what they saw was adequate for them to go to the next stage of FEMA investigation for all of Georgetown County beaches.

According to Otis, depending on where you are on the beach you can see the dunes eroded from 6 all the way to 18 feet. In some areas the dunes have completely eroded away; this allowed the tides to reach people's homes. Otis told me in some places the tide washed through homes, into roads and into the creek.

Otis told me he hasn't seen the beach this eroded since Hurricane Hugo in 1989.

"This is the most significant beach erosion that we've had," said Mayor Otis. "I've been mayor here 18 years and this is the most significant beach erosion we've had in 18 years."

He says after Hurricane Hugo it took federal and state funding and local labor to get the beach back to the way it was. And he says this case will be no different.

Dunes aren't just sand structures covered in grass, they actually play an important part on beaches. They absorb the impact and protect inland areas from high energy storms and act as a barrier for tides. They also keep the water from destroying structures.

Otis told me tourist on the coast of South Carolina is one of the biggest industries in the state. The dunes ultimately protect that and play a critical role. He says the health of the beach and the protection of the dunes is all that

stands between the beach and the loss of the tourism. Buildings, houses, roads and different infrastructure are just a few important things that can be lost by the complete erosion of dunes

SCDOT reopens Trenholm Road in Forest Acres

[The State](#) (Columbia), Oct. 16, 2015

COLUMBIA, SC - South Carolina Department of Transportation officials said part of Trenholm Road in the Forest Acres area has been reopened to traffic Friday morning after it was closed following historic flooding that enveloped the state.

Officials said they have cleared the roadway and it is deemed safe for traffic. A large part of the road had since been reopened since the latest announcement. The announcement comes a day after officials reopened Garners Ferry Road and a portion of North Main Street, both also closed following the floods.

Motorists are urged to use caution and be on the lookout for any remaining SCDOT workers still operating in the area.

SC Budget Panel To Assess “Floodmageddon”

[Fit News](#), October 16, 2015

GET READY FOR A MAJOR TAX HIKE, PEOPLE...

The S.C. House of Representatives ways and means committee – which takes the first swing at the Palmetto State’s budget each year – will meet on November 5 to begin the process of assessing the costs associated with “Floodmageddon.”

This month’s record rainfall and subsequent flooding did major damage to South Carolina’s infrastructure, and lawmakers are getting together to determine how much it will cost to fix the problems – and how to pay that tab.

Not surprisingly, their first inclination is to raise taxes ... and unlike earlier this year they’ve got S.C. governor Nikki Haley on board with that plan (Haley previously opposed a gas tax hike).

Early estimates indicate that the storm did at least \$1.5 billion worth of damage to South Carolina’s poorly maintained network of roads and bridges. Now, should that total – the costly consequence of years of political prioritization – necessitate a tax hike?

No.

The state has plenty of money to cover these costs. And even if it didn’t, it has assets it can sell to raise the money. As well as programs it can cut to meet the need.

Will House budget writers look to any of these options before they decide to stick it to taxpayers?

Don’t be silly ...

This “Republican-controlled” South Carolina people, where more money is always the answer to chronic dysfunction.

Government never lets a crisis go to waste, and we fully expect these liberal lawmakers to stick Palmetto State motorists – who already pay a disproportionately high percentage of their low incomes on fuel – with a massive tax hike tab.

Southerners take care of their own

[Powdersville Post](#), October 16th, 2015

You can say many things about Southerners, but if this country has learned one thing about them recently, it’s that they stick together.

Just a short while ago it seemed that the state was about to tear itself apart over the controversy surrounding the Confederate Battle Flag being taken down following the tragic shooting in Charleston. Many people who live in the traditionally conservative Upstate expressed outrage at the flag’s removal.

Now, with the Midlands and especially Columbia itself affected by floods via Hurricane Joaquin, some people might have expected that animosity to have spilled over along with a “Well, you’re on your own” mentality.

Not so.

The outpouring of flood relief from the northern part of the state has been nothing short of amazing.

Within hours of realizing that people, their homes and their possessions were in danger of being washed away, churches, fire departments, city halls and schools were busy at work organizing relief operations.

A WordPress blogger in Columbia wrote that the problem they were facing wasn’t a shortage of water and clean clothes, but that once a need was expressed, it was met so immediately and fully that they were having difficulties finding places to store such an outpouring of instant generosity.

“The problem in SC is that our needs are changing by the minute because as soon as one is identified, it is met beyond measure. The problem in SC is that our generosity outweighs the greatest natural disaster our state has seen in

quite a long time ... perhaps ever.”

And that’s awesome.

In the days following the flooding, social media was filled with posts offering to help. Ryan Snipes, who lives in Chapin, posted on Facebook “Does anyone need any help? Water? Shower? Food? I’ve got a truck and free hands.” His phone number was included. Snipes’ offer for aid was just one of countless that were all over the social media website.

This has been a tough year for South Carolina and in many ways the people who live in this fine state have shown themselves to be a true family. They may squabble and disagree with one another, but ultimately, when things go bad, they’re there for one another.

The flood waters may be receding, but the rebuilding process has just begun. Displaced families are returning to find their homes destroyed. Small business owners who have lost their livelihoods are now faced with the prospect of starting over. Roads, bridges and dams need to be repaired or replaced.

But if the past couple weeks are any indicator, the help will continue to roll in — because Southerners take care of their own.

What the storm means for local farmers and how you can help

Field of Broken Dreams

By Nikki Seibert Kelley

[Charleston City Paper](#), Oct. 14, 2015

As the waters slowly recede, residents of South Carolina will begin to assess the damage caused by the incredible amount of rain, severe winds, high tides, and ultimately the record-breaking flooding. For farmers across the state of South Carolina, hard decisions will have to be made as they survey their fields and determine, what, if anything can be done to salvage their fall crops. Farm support agencies surveying the loss on a regional and statewide scale are grappling with what exactly is the best path forward and how to advise these businesses as we all receive a crash course in disaster management and insurance coverage for flood-related damage. Due to the scale and severity of this event, victims of the national disaster will have the opportunity to apply for support and services based on their losses as individuals, businesses, or organizations. The S.C. Emergency Management Division and FEMA have outlined protocols for claims but the process itself is very nuanced, even more so if you are operating a business as unique as a farm operation.

Few businesses are as vulnerable to natural disasters as farms; their inventory and assets are exposed to the elements, unable to move or evacuate. A flooding event like this can literally wash an entire business out to sea. Even when the weather is cooperative, pest and disease damage is minimal, and labor is available, these businesses are already operating on extremely tight profit margins and sell into a constantly fluctuating market.

For those not familiar with the day-to-day of farming, it is important to understand that in order to grow healthy plants ready for market, farmers must plan their seasons well in advance by ordering fall seeds, inputs (fertilizer, minerals) and materials (row cover, seed trays) while it is still summer. For vegetable farmers, plants are started in greenhouses weeks prior to planting, cover crop is mowed down and incorporated, fields are cultivated and bedded up, irrigation is laid out, fertilizer spread and plants transplanted or direct seeded. All of these steps happen well in advance of planting and are very labor and equipment intensive, costing the farmer thousands of dollars and days spent working from sunrise to sunset. And this my friends, is exactly the point in the season in which our farmers found themselves in two weekend's ago when an entire fall season's worth of rain arrived in less than three days. Months of planning, investment, planting, blood, sweat, and tears washed away in a weekend.

The two most common questions I have received are: "Can't they just re-plant?" and "Don't farms have crop insurance?" Both questions unfortunately have very complicated answers.

In the best of times, timing is a delicate dance for farmers because plants are very sensitive to daylight hours, rain, and fluctuation in temperatures that create a window that may have already closed. Assuming there is still time, the farmers must first wait for the water to drain and the rain to stop while the planting window continues to narrow. Second, fields, ditches, and roads must be repaired to provide access, drainage, and planting beds. Then, after this backbreaking work, farmers will take off their muddy boots and sit down in the office to crunch the numbers to calculate if they can 1) afford a second planting and associated labor, 2) determine what can still be planted this time of year, and 3) speculate on if there will be markets for them to sell their product to at later harvest dates. Most farmers will get back in the field because despite the risk this is the profession they are passionate about and they are too far emotionally and financially invested to back down. Perhaps Mark Twain put it best, "Farming is gambling with dirt."

Although there are a number of crop insurance programs for farmers, these are simply not designed for small to mid-sized diversified vegetable producers, and many local operations do not qualify or have the capacity to apply to these programs. On the up side, there are new programs coming down the line that address this gap in services by

providing support designed to meet the needs of these farms. The Whole Farm Revenue Protection program updates for 2016 create a system that allows diversified farms and smaller livestock operations to receive insurance protection. Unfortunately this does not apply to the current damage, but recent events will likely provide farms with the incentive to apply for these future programs.

As a community that loves our farmers, seeing them suffer a devastating blow of this magnitude is heartbreaking. The good news: each and every one of you is a consumer and has the ability to support these farm businesses by being a loyal, patient, and eager consumer. If you purchased a Community Supported Agriculture Share (CSA), then hopefully you recognize and respect the intent behind these business models in which you buy a "share" of the crops and take the risks alongside the farmer. Many farmers had to harvest everything out of their fields prior to the floods and currently have a bounty that needs to be moved quickly. Others will not have product again for months and need your patience. In the coming weeks, there will be flash sales, volunteer workdays, fundraisers and calls for support that I encourage you to participate in. And when the memory of the flood begins to fade, I hope you will continue to seek out ways to support your farmers by supporting businesses, organizations, policies, and regulations that have their best interests in mind.

At the very minimum, you have three chances a day to support these hardworking individuals that spend their days fighting the odds in the fields to feed our families.

Nikki Siebert Kelley is the director of sustainable agriculture at Lowcountry Local First.

Old Mill Brewpub Rebuilding/The Beer Community Cares

Old Mill Brewpub Rebuilding/The Beer Community Cares

By Tug Baker

[Free Times](#), October 14, 2015

Our entire community is still in recovery, and one particular member of the craft beer community was hit especially hard in the recent flooding disaster. If you've ever sat on the deck at the Old Mill Brew Pub in Lexington and enjoyed one of their great beers along with the beautiful and very close view of the Lexington Mill Pond and Twelvemile Creek, then you probably have a good idea about how devastating the Mill Pond Dam breach could be to the Brew Pub. Judging from pictures of the aftermath, most of that deck that you could always find crowded during the weekend is now collapsed. The building itself has suffered significant structural damage as well, and the pub is, of course, closed. They are already hard at work rebuilding with the help of supporters and volunteers, and their sign currently cheekily reads, "It's a dam shame we are closed, but we will re-open." If you want to help with recovery efforts, you can head to oldmillbrew.net and buy gift certificates in increments of \$25 to use when the brewpub opens up its doors again. There is also a GoFundMe campaign to raise money for the employees of the Old Mill Brew Pub who are out of work until the pub can reopen; head to gofundme.com and search for Brew Pub Employees Disaster Fund. You can also see a picture there showing some of the damage. If anyone remembers the condition those buildings were in before the Old Mill Brew Pub opened, you know that they did a lot of work to get there so I can only imagine that they will be reopening even bigger and better.

The Beer Community Cares

Speaking of doing what we can for our community in the wake of tragedy, it was very encouraging to see how the craft beer community stepped up to help out any way they could. Conquest Brewing collected 1,276 pounds of food and supplies for Harvest Hope, Swamp Cabbage accepted donations for flood victims, and River Rat served hot meals and water to anyone in need and those helping with cleanup efforts. Craft and Draft received shipments of supplies and water from Wilmington, North Carolina's Port City Brew Bus as well as Greenville's Community Tap and made them available to those in need. All in all, it was yet another shining example of how the beer community cares. You can also get in on some more caring at Craft and Draft on Wednesday, Oct. 14, as they host a pint night benefitting Palmetto Place Children's Shelter. One dollar from every pint goes to help kids in need.

Creekside, Brewpub making quick comeback

By Rob Cottingham

[Lexington Chronicle](#), Oct 15, 2015

Some went unscathed, others lost everything.

The Old Mill Brewpub just barely avoided disaster.

"By the time I got here (shortly after 5 a.m.), the dam had breached, so all of the water was out of the parking lot and had worked its way down and taken the distillery and the corner of our building out," said owner John Clinger, who opened the establishment two and a half years ago.

Once he learned there were no casualties, Clinger turned his attention to the business. (Remainder of story restricted to paid subscribers)

Cayce officers rescue 2 men from flood waters

By Terry Ward

[Lexington Chronicle](#), Oct 15, 2015

Raging flood waters endangered many lives.

Sgt. Austol Youmans and Public Safety Officer John Maynard helped save one.

The two Cayce Public Safety officers were patrolling on Sunday, Oct. 4, when a man in a truck drove into the deep end of a fast moving flood on Bluff Road in Columbia.

Thanks to a mutual-aid agreement between Cayce, West Columbia and Columbia for emergencies, personnel from Cayce

(Remainder of story restricted to paid subscribers)

West Cola firefighters brave rushing water, save woman

By Terry Ward

[Lexington Chronicle](#), Oct 15, 2015

Raging flood water jerked Clara Gantt from the arms of Bradley Smith.

Smith is a Swift Water Rescue Technician with the West Columbia Fire Department.

“The current was so strong and she slipped out of my hands,” said Smith. He was in Columbia on the Sunday morning of Oct. 4.

Lt. Sean Harshaw said the WCFD began receiving calls overnight. Flood waters were rising all around.

(Remainder of story restricted to paid subscribers)

Red Cross also helps with emotional fallout from flood

By Diane Knich

[Charleston Post and Courier](#)

Oct 15 2015

It's easy to see the physical mess left in the wake of disasters like the floods that roared through South Carolina earlier this month, but the emotional damage can be more elusive, says the American Red Cross.

Suffering through a natural disaster can be a traumatic event, said Red Cross spokeswoman Patricia Kemp, and it takes action to help people with the emotional fallout. The group, along with community partners, provided 2,400 health and mental health services to people in the state in need throughout the flooding, she said.

Robin McRae, a volunteer disaster mental health worker, said some people during the flooding were stranded in their homes as the water rose, had to evacuate, and lost many of their possessions, including treasured photographs. All of those events take an emotional toll on people, she said.

McRae recalled the story of a woman who was sleeping and unaware that flood waters were rushing into her home in the middle of the night. She woke up needing to use the bathroom, threw her legs over the side of the bed and into the flood water surrounding it.

The woman and her husband had to call for help, grab their sleeping grandchild and sash through the water in the dark to get out of the house.

Incidents like that are not easy to get over, said McRae, a retired school counselor who has worked in Charleston and Berkeley counties.

She's been volunteering with the Red Cross since 2011, she said, and often goes to shelters where disaster victims are staying, just to see how they're doing emotionally, she said.

During the recent flooding, she spent time at shelters in Andrews and North Santee, she said. “When people go through a disaster, they need to talk about that. You feel like you're losing your grip.”

Most people are resilient, she said. They mostly need to hear that what they're feeling is normal.

But people who already were vulnerable before the flood could be at risk of developing depression or other mental health problems in its wake. People who lost their homes and possessions are grieving, she said, and some people don't bounce back as easily as others.

For instance, a person who has previously been through a disaster, or is going through a traumatic life event, such as divorce, might be particularly vulnerable.

People may continue to be troubled for awhile, she said, but if they are experiencing crying spells or having difficulty eating or sleeping for more than two weeks, they should reach to local mental health agencies for assistance.

And people who have been through a disaster also should take good care of their physical health, said David Ball, a nurse and Red Cross volunteer who also spent time in South Carolina shelters. That's important after going through a tough emotional experiences.

People cleaning up after the flood should focus mostly on what they can accomplish in a particular day, he said. "They should stay present. Otherwise it's overwhelming."

If you need help in the aftermath of the flood contact:
Red Cross Disaster Assistance Hotline: (855) 773-3175
Red Cross 24/7 Crisis Hotline: (843)745-0144
Trident United Way: 211

Beaufort County scrambles to salvage tourism hit from flood misperception

By STEPHEN FASTENAU

[Hilton Head Island Packet](#), Oct. 14, 2015

The historic rain fell during one of Beaufort County's most popular weekends of the year to host visitors. And though the area was spared the tragic flooding experienced in other parts of the state, the wet weather and perception of the state as a disaster zone have caused a significant economic loss in some areas.

"We are talking about a \$30 million (public relations) hit," Robb Wells, tourism director for the Beaufort Regional Chamber of Commerce, told Beaufort City Council on Tuesday about the state's woes.

Discoversouthcarolina.com, the state's tourism website, is sending a social media team to coastal areas -- including Beaufort County -- to spread the word that the communities are still open to visitors, Wells said. The chamber plans to buy advertising with money previously allocated for Christmas and next spring.

Radio spots will be placed in the markets known to draw visitors here, with promotions like giving away free overnight stays, Wells said.

On Hilton Head Island, hotel reservations were canceled in droves during the days of the worst weather, said Gail Wargo, director of sales and marketing at the Westin Hilton Head Resort and Spa. But after that, public messages from state and local business leaders that the area is open to visitors has resonated, Wargo said.

"The Lowcountry is open for business and doing just fine, fortunately," she said. "We really dodged a bullet."

The Beaufort chamber, the designated marketing organization for northern Beaufort County, is taking steps to restore the area's image ahead of some signature events.

The Historic Beaufort Foundation's Fall Festival of Houses and Gardens, for instance, is slated for the end of the month. Main Street Beaufort's Fall ArtWalk is Oct. 24 and its downtown trick-or-treating event scheduled for Oct. 29.

In addition to Beaufort's hotels and restaurants, Main Street Beaufort also felt the effect of the rainy weather at the beginning of the month.

The organization's Beaufort Shrimp Festival, its biggest money-maker, was canceled. Director LaNelle Fabian said Main Street had expected to make about \$38,000. Coupled with Main Street funding being cut from the city's budget, the nonprofit representing downtown business has lost \$90,000 in about four months, Fabian told City Council on Tuesday.

After dropping from two employees to one due to the budget cut, Fabian has established volunteer teams to address Main Street's issues.

One group will advocate for a parking garage downtown. Another will reach out to area businesses with ways to encourage growth, and a team will assess events to determine which ones are most efficient.

Now a team will look at possible money-making ventures to try and make up lost revenue.

"We're going to put our heads together," Fabian said. "We can't snap our fingers and make a shrimp festival happen over night."

Latest: 10 roads reopen as repairs make progress

By Dan Brown

[Aiken Standard](#), Oct. 15, 2015

The list of roads closed in Aiken County has shortened as 10 roads have re-opened as of 5:24 p.m. Oct. 14.

A total of two state roads and 11 county roads remain closed.

Open roads

According to the latest release from the Aiken County Emergency Management Division, the County and State have confirmed the following roads passable and in good condition:

Arcola Street from Poinsettia Road to South Dixie Road

Holly Pond Road from Ready Pond Road to Wishbone Road

Huckleberry Finn Road at Goose Platter Road to the Lexington County Line (Batesburg-Leesville area)

Hutto Pond Road from Ready Pond Road to Migrant Camp Road

Ida Road

Jaybird Road from Millers Pond Road to Festival Trail Road

Jim Williamson SR Road

Mt. Ebal Road

Corinth Church Road at Hollow Creek Road to Orangeburg County Line (Salley area)

Sugar Pine Road

The following state and county roads remain closed:.

Closed State roads

Rocky Grove Road (Hoover Road to Warner Road) Closed due to road washout. Severe erosion to roadway (not passable), tree down, electrical wires obstruction

Old Shoals Road from U.S. 1 to Mt. Pleasant Road (Monetta Area. All lanes blocked both ways. Closed due to flooding with the bridge slab failing and washing out.)

Closed County roads

Blackbird Road from Rushing Wind Road to Toy Road (Wagener area)

Crim Hydrick Road from Hwy. 302 to .5 miles from S.C. 302 (Wagener area)

Cumbee Trail Road from Clayton Road to Kedron Church Road (Monetta area)

Harness Road from Grady Pond Road to Poplar Springs Road (Wagener area)

Holder Road closed approximately .2 miles from Huckleberry Finn Road toward the County Line (Batesburg-Leesville area)

Hoover Road between Walter Poole Road and Rocky Grove Road (Salley area)

Koala Bear Road from Dairy Barn Road to Gunter Pond Road (Monetta area)

J E Poole Road from Hollow Creek Road to Topper Street (Salley area)

Nantuckett Road (dirt portion, Salley area)

Old Chalk Bed Road from North Fork Road at Aiken/Lexington County Line (Batesburg-Leesville area; Bridge is almost washed out.)

Williams Busbee Road from Holiness Church Road 2.5 Miles North (Wagener area)

The Aiken County road closures list can be found on the Aiken County Facebook page.

The Aiken County Emergency Services Division will continue to update road closures on its Facebook page at www.facebook.com/AikenCountyEMD.

Florence County approved for public assistance

By Whitney Hill

[NBC 32 WMBF](#) Myrtle Beach-Florence

Oct. 16, 2015

FLORENCE COUNTY, SC (WMBF) – Florence County has been approved for public assistance disaster declaration.

This includes all of Florence County's jurisdictions and special purpose tax districts, according to a news release from the Florence County Emergency Management Division.

Government agencies can apply for reimbursement of assured emergency response and disaster recovery costs related with the flooding event under this declaration.

The declaration is in addition to the individual disaster declaration that was issued on October 7, which allowed citizens to apply for federal aid.

Surfside Beach gets good news on flood insurance

By Tom O'Dare

[MyHorryNews.com](#), October 16, 2015

In the wake of all the floods throughout the state over the last two weeks, the residents of Surfside Beach got some great news Tuesday night.

The cost of their flood insurance could be going down in the near future.

Town Planning, Building and Zoning Director Sabrina Morris told the town council that she had just received word that the town has received a 5 rating from the National Flood Insurance Community Rating System.

The CRS rating determines the average cost of the flood insurance premiums for those needing it in town.

Morris said Tuesday's news was especially exciting because the new rating is a four-place jump over the town's previous rank of a 9. The lower the rating, the lower the cost of the insurance.

In practical terms, this means an average savings of \$155 per individual policy owner and a total savings of the policies throughout the town of \$361,577.

For the previous 9 rating, the savings would have been \$32 per policy and a community savings of \$74,230.

The National Flood Insurance Program's (NFIP) Community Rating System (CRS) is a voluntary incentive

program that recognizes and encourages community floodplain management activities that exceed the minimum NFIP requirements.

As a result, flood insurance premium rates are discounted to reflect the reduced flood risk resulting from the community actions meeting the three goals of the CRS:

- Reduce flood damage to insurable property;
- Strengthen and support the insurance aspects of the NFIP, and
- Encourage a comprehensive approach to floodplain management.

Morris headed up a committee that worked for over a year and a half, collecting data as well as coming up with programs to inform the public about the town's flood safety plans.

The CRS system has a checklist of items that each town must comply with to get a CRS rating.

Among these are flood maps, stormwater plans and public relations efforts to inform the public about flood safety, flood insurance and other relevant issues.

Each of these steps is awarded points with the total points determining the CRS rating.

Surfside Beach collected 2,887 points jumping them from 9 to 5.

Morris said she was hoping for a jump from 9 but was pleasantly surprised at moving to a 5, adding that most nearby municipalities remained the same or moved up only one number or two.

Mayor Doug Samples thanked Morris on behalf of the council and the residents for working so hard and creating such a potential savings on flood insurance.

Councilmember Mary Beth Mabry echoes Samples' sentiments and added that Morris' committee had to work extra hard because many of the CRS requirements were changed halfway through the process.

"You essentially had to start over right in the middle and still did a great job," Mabry said.

Lowcountry Biz Boil: Someone tell Al Roker it's OK to smile when you visit S.C.

[Charleston Regional Business Journal](#), Oct. 16, 2015

When legendary NBC weatherman Al Roker descended on the Palmetto State with his cohort of national media, he did what a lot of people do when they come to a new place: He took a selfie with his crew and posted it on Twitter.

A couple of things went wrong. They took the photo in front of a car that had fallen under a collapsed roadway, and they were smiling like tourists in front of the pineapple fountain. The reaction was swift, and Roker quickly realized disaster selfies are rarely a good idea.

Social media lit up, with some especially angry tweets coming out of Columbia, where the deadly flood hit the hardest and is still creating chaos as residents try to recover. Roker took down the post and immediately apologized.

Of course, the Internet doesn't forget.

We shouldn't give Al too hard of a time. Like a lot of TV personalities, he's known for taking selfies with his fans and his sources. Also, South Carolina makes a lot of people smile, but what Al missed in that moment is something a lot of old-school and new-school journalists/TV personalities and media types seem to have trouble with lately: Context matters, but when people are dying, context matters more.

In Al Roker's world, he doesn't have "viewers" as much as he has "fans." And he probably thought his fans would want to see what Al was up to by coming down South. Al probably thought this was a moment to give his fans a view behind the scenes by showing them:

- 1) He was out in the field, covering the news — with a collapsed roadway in the background.
- 2) His crew, who probably only show up in behind-the-scenes candid shots anyway.
- 3) That famous, ever-present Al Roker smile.

All this was pretty much confirmed by the comments from Al's out-of-state fans, who happily accepted his apology and said something along the lines of "We knew what you meant."

Roker's selfie misfire wasn't the only awkward incident created during the disaster. One of the more contextually confused, tone-deaf media moments came after WIS Channel 10 weatherman Tim Miller teared up spontaneously when he saw the sun come out over Columbia during one of his reports.

It was a genuine moment in what had been a difficult few days. Everyone who saw Tim's report in the Columbia area completely identified with him. He connected with his audience.

But then WIS couldn't let it go. They did a story about Tim crying on camera, creating the in-studio equivalent of a disaster selfie.

WIS tried to capitalize on the moment and, in doing so, made it garish. The TV station then added to the spectacle by declaring that the weatherman worked for six more hours without even eating.

Hate to break it to you, TV dudes, but if you're living in the uncertainty of having to evacuate your home with your life floating away or having to plan a funeral for your loved one, it's hard to have sympathy for someone who hasn't had a sandwich for six hours.

When natural disasters occur, journalists have to absorb the emotion and circumstances and carry the responsibility of delivering a measured response to help their community understand the reality of a situation.

Often have to do it, while ignoring their own personal lives and property. That's the job.

Reporters like Anderson Cooper on CNN, Victoria Hansen on ABC News 4 in Charleston and Harve Jacobs on Live 5 News in Charleston stand out with a restrained social media presence, and there are others who also understand that they're not the story. They are afforded the invitation into our homes and offices because they provide access to information, not because we want to see their latest adventure.

Al Roker is welcome to come to South Carolina any time he wants, even when there's not a disaster unfolding behind him. We'll even take him out for a bite to eat.

City Manager Teresa Wilson addresses city employee concerns about time off during flood

By Jeremy Turnalge

NBC 10 WIS Columbia, Oct. 16, 2015

COLUMBIA, SC (WIS) - The City of Columbia held a news conference on Thursday to begin the transition from a state of emergency to normal operating procedures as the Midlands continues to recover from last week's massive floods.

The Lady Street Emergency Operations Center will stand down at 4 p.m. on Friday. Several other items will begin to normalize as next week progresses.

Trash pick-up, for example, will resume normal operations on Monday after city officials say more than 2,500 tons of debris was picked up after the flooding.

But one concern relayed to us comes to us from several city employees who worry about paychecks and being forced to use vacation days or receive no payment if they were considered non-essential personnel during the response.

"What happens during this period of time is that we are obviously looking at the essential staff personnel who have been working and working tirelessly since this event started actually having to come in to work as the nature of their jobs," City Manager Teresa Wilson said. "I would imagine the questions you have gotten are from non-essential staff who obviously don't come into work during this period of time, so what has to happen from a management standpoint is that I have to make the decision to forgive the time for the non-essential staff persons who obviously couldn't come in. This was an Act of God, so those are all things I would factor in to a decision to forgive time, which I will make in due time."

Wilson said the time off will most likely be forgiven and time probably won't be lost.

How to donate items for Colleton County flood victims

The Press and Standard (Walterboro), October 16, 2015

The American Red Cross, Colleton County Emergency Preparedness Agency and Goodwill Industries Retail Store have partnered to help the Colleton County flood victims. Those wishing to donate items (see list of needed goods suggested by the S.C. Emergency Management Division) to assist the families in Colleton County to provide needed relief and support may bring the items to the Goodwill Industries Retail Store, 112 Robertson Blvd., Walterboro.

In the Cottageville area, Cottageville Express, 10661 Cottageville Highway, is accepting donations of canned food (particularly meat and fish), personal hygiene items, peanut butter, oatmeal and rice, but no clothing at this location.

A list of suggested items from the S.C. Emergency Management Division is attached.

For more information or assistance, call the Colleton County Emergency Preparedness Agency, 843-549-5632, or Cottageville Express, 843-835-8836.

Those wishing to make monetary donations may do so through one of the following organizations (links can be found online here <http://www.scemd.org/recovery-section/donations-and-volunteers>)

Adventist Community Services

1.877.227.2702

American Red Cross of South Carolina

1.800.435.7669

Feeding America

1.800.771.2303

Harvest Hope Food Bank

1.803.254.4432

Lowcountry Food Bank

1.843.747.8146

Lutheran Disaster Response

1.800.638.3522

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance

1.800.872.3283

Salvation Army

1.800.725.2769

Water Missions International

1. 843-769-7395

Southern Baptist Convention/Disaster Relief

1.800.462.8657

United Methodist Committee on Relief

1.800.554.8583

United Way of America

1.800.272.4630

Richland 1, Richland 2 to Operate on Small Delay Next Week

CBS 19 WLTX Columbia, October 16, 2015

Richland One:

Richland School District One, which represents some of the most impacted areas from the flooding, said buses will pick up students one hour later than the posted pick-up times. School will start one-hour later than normal for students: 8:30 a.m. for elementary schools; 9:00 a.m. for high schools, and 9:45 a.m. for middle schools.

Employees will report to work at their normal times.

Richland One's says their afterschool child care programs will operate next week, but afterschool programs that require school bus transportation (21st Century Community Learning Centers, South Carolina Chamber Homework Centers, Comprehensive Remediation and Athletic Tutorial) will not be in operation.

October 22 will remain an early release day for all schools, but October 23, which was originally a teacher workday/student holiday, will be a regular day for students and staff.

Richland Two:

Students are asked to report to school or their bus stop one-hour later than normal. This also applies to high school early bird classes.

Thursday and Friday will remain student holidays, but Thursday will remain a professional development day for teachers.

There also will be no early release on October 21 for elementary and middle school students. Three year-old half-day classes start back on Monday.

A fork in the road

By Bill Davis, senior editor

<http://www.statehousereport.com/2015/10/16/oct16-issue/>

Statehouse Report, October 16, 2015

Devastation and death in South Carolina wrought by Hurricane Joaquin could push state legislators to tackle the state's growing \$40 billion transportation infrastructure needs when it reconvenes in January, politicians say.

Joaquin's wrath closed hundreds of roads and bridges across the state, ended 17 lives and wiped out \$300 million in crops. A total estimate for the damage is forthcoming, but Gov. Nikki Haley has called the damages "significant and widespread."

Since the storm that dumped 11 trillion gallons of rain on the Carolinas, President Barack Obama has signed a declaration that South Carolina was the site of a "major disaster," which cleared the way for federal money to be spent here to supplement state efforts. As of Thursday, the disaster declaration makes people and businesses in 19 counties from the Midlands to the coast eligible for physical and economic federal assistance. Businesses and organizations in 17 other counties are eligible for federal economic injury loans.

With Joaquin, Haley accepted federal help, a reversal of her political logic for the last two years of declining federal aid to expand Medicaid to help 200,000 of the state's poorest get access to health care.

Joaquin exacerbated a transportation infrastructure disaster brewing for quite a while in South Carolina. Eight years ago after a bridge over the Mississippi River collapsed in Minnesota, Palmetto State legislators began whispering, wondering if that could happen here.

The answer has turned out to be, yes, South Carolina. There is a Mother Nature.

So where are we now?

But over the last few years, state government has done comparatively little to address the road and bridge infrastructure needs.

Federal officials have estimated the state needed to spend \$40 billion over 25 years — about \$1.5 billion every year — to bring roads and bridges to good levels. Included in an expansive report was the revelation that more than 8,400 bridges in the state, with 830 of the more than 8,400 bridges in the state were “structurally deficient,” and 10 were closed for structural problems. Two thirds were deemed “satisfactory,” with 19 percent “substandard” and 9 percent “functionally obsolete.”

Three years ago with this news, the legislature “dug deep” and came up with an additional \$50-million in one-time funding to be able to borrow \$500 million for roads. Now, most agree that the \$40 billion transportation deficit has grown significantly since Joaquin sent floods of water across the state.

So now that people have seen buckling roads and rain that caused more than two dozen dams to breach comes a sobering question: Which does South Carolina hate more — death or raising taxes?

“Something will happen”

State Rep. Gilda Cobb-Hunter (D-Orangeburg) said the General Assembly has “no choice but to do something.”

Cobb-Hunter

“Something will happen, but the question is what and how much,” said Cobb-Hunter, who serves on the budget-writing Ways and Means Committee. She worries that the fear of raising taxes on the other side of the political aisle could preclude significant action.

A Statehouse Report QuickPoll last week showed that 90 percent of readers who responded wanted the state’s 16.8-cent-per-gallon gas tax to be raised to fund road upgrades. A September Winthrop Poll showed 84 percent of respondents believed repairing existing roads should be the state’s top priority in transportation spending.

House Speaker Jay Lucas (R-Hartsville), who Wednesday asked a House committee to start the process of better understanding the flood recovery process, last week pointed out that the House passed an infrastructure bill this year to the Senate where it withered. “Every day that passes without a plan drives up the repair costs, places our citizens’ safety at risk, and threatens the future of our economy,” he said in a statement.

State Sen. Paul Campbell (R-Goose Creek), who serves on the Transportation Committee, said the Senate modified the House bill and it is already sitting atop the coming agenda in that chamber on special order.

Campbell

“When you look at our neighbors whose motor fuel user fees are \$0.28 per gallon in Georgia and \$0.37 in North Carolina and have been for several years, you can understand why their roads are significantly better,” Campbell said. “If the General Assembly had indexed our fee in 1987 (last time for an increase), we would be at \$0.34 per gallon.” Currently, South Carolina’s gas tax is \$0.168 per gallon .

Campbell added that several counties in his neck of the state have already crafted special one-cent sales taxes to support local roads.

State Sen. Larry Martin (R-Pickens), one of that chamber’s most experienced members and the chair of the Judiciary committee, said he believes the General Assembly will come together in a bipartisan fashion to “get this important job done.”

Skinning that cat

But how that “important” job gets done could doom it. Some are like state Sen. Tom Davis (R-Bluffton), who has said he would “push back hard against anyone who says ‘only higher gas taxes will fix our roads.’”

Haley called for an increase in the state gas tax earlier this year, but only if there were an offsetting cut in income taxes so the overall budget wouldn’t increase. Some say that position may have been dealt a deathblow by the extent of Joaquin’s wrath.

Cleary

“The real questions is will the governor insist on a \$2 billion tax cut to allow \$400 million for roads, even though [South Carolina] has one of the lowest tax rates in the country,” said state Sen. Ray Cleary, a Georgetown Republican who announced last week he wasn’t running for re-election.

“Or will a majority of legislators vote for an \$800 million tax cut hoping to avoid a [gubernatorial] veto and giving SC DOT [Department of Transportation] \$800 million – much less that it needed before the disaster – and ignore our reducing funding by over \$350 million per year to higher education — causing our state to have the highest tuition rates of any southeastern state.”

Cleary said he believed if politicians cleared away most wasteful spending and were honest with constituents and if the state still needed more money for roads, voters would support them.

But where those extra dollars come from is also a problem. Yes, South Carolina has one of the lowest per-gallon

gas levies in the country. But, thanks to rising fuel efficiencies and other factors, state documents show a rise in the gastax would only be a short-term solution as revenues would decrease over time

One immediate solution is for the state to continue to try to borrow its way out of the problem. But there's only so much borrowing capacity that the state has. And most realize slow times will come again, which will cut borrowing capacity even more at a time when transportation needs won't decrease. Another solution: Increasing user fees and fines, but voters have already begun grumbling about getting bit in the wallet everywhere they turn.

In the words of one old sarcastic Columbia sage, in the face of Joaquin, "governance does happen." But the unknown and unknowable question is: how much and when will it happen – especially in an election year?

South Carolina to collect flood donations at Vanderbilt game

[The Associated Press](#), October 16, 2015

COLUMBIA, S.C. - South Carolina will collect donations at its football game with Vanderbilt on Saturday for those affected by the massive flooding in much of the state.

The school athletic department said it will have red kettles like those used by the Salvation Army at the entrances to Williams-Brice Stadium. Donations will be accepted from 2 p.m. when the gates open until 4 p.m. when the Gamecocks (2-4, 0-4 Southeastern Conference) face the Commodores (2-3, 0-2).

The school said all proceeds would be split between the United Way of the Midlands, the American Red Cross, the SC Flood Relief Fund at Central Carolina Community Foundation and the USC Flood Recovery Fund for Faculty, Staff and Students.

Athletic director Ray Tanner said the school appreciates efforts of those groups helping South Carolina recover.

USC to coordinate donations for flood relief at Saturday's game

[NBC 4 WYFF](#) Greenville, Oct. 16, 2015

COLUMBIA, S.C. —The University of South Carolina Athletics Department is coordinating an effort collecting cash donations for South Carolina flood relief at the entrance gates of Williams-Brice Stadium at Saturday's homecoming game against Vanderbilt.

All proceeds will be split equally between the United Way of the Midlands, the American Red Cross, the SC Flood Relief Fund at Central Carolina Community Foundation and the USC Flood Recovery Fund for Faculty, Staff and Students, set up as part of the USC Family Fund.

Funds will be collected when the gates open at 2 p.m. and continue until the start of the game at 4 p.m. Donations will be taken in the traditional red kettles used and donated by the Salvation Army for this event.

"The Athletics Department is appreciative of the efforts of these organizations to get our state back on its feet," said Gamecock Athletics Director Ray Tanner. "We've been through tremendous adversity but the people of South Carolina are resilient and have put their best foot forward in helping others impacted by the floods."

The Athletics Department will honor first responders of the Midlands at halftime and will also recognize flood relief efforts

Forestry officials estimate flood losses at \$65 million

By Tim Smith

[Greenville News](#), October 16, 2015

COLUMBIA - South Carolina's forest industry has sustained losses of at least \$65 million from this month's historic flooding, state officials say.

The assessment does not include what are expected to be additional millions of dollars in damage and repair to private forest roads, which is unknown, according to the South Carolina Forestry Commission..

"Some mills have reported shortages of wood deliveries and difficulty shipping finished products because of closed roads, bridges and rail lines," said State Forester Gene Kodama. "Many loggers in the flood zone have not been able to operate since the storm because of wet ground and inaccessible roads and bridges. These conditions are not likely to improve soon."

Friday's assessment by the Forestry Commission was calculated using forest planting and inventory data, aerial surveillance, mill reports and consultations with loggers and landowners.

The estimate comes on top of \$300 million in agricultural losses reported last week by State Agriculture Commissioner Hugh Weathers.

Forestry officials say the estimated loss is a fraction of the industry's \$18.6 billion contribution to the state's economy.

But they said it has a huge and immediate impact on the forest landowners, loggers, mills and suppliers in the

counties affected by heavy rainfall and flooding. The loss of access to roads, bridges and rail lines, higher operating costs for loggers, increased transportation costs for mills, and overall lost productivity account for most of the economic loss, commission officials said.

“We’re fortunate, however, that more than two-thirds of the state is forested because forests are resilient and renewable ecological systems,” Kodama said. “Forests help prevent erosion from flooding, filter the air and provide 60 percent of the water we use.”

Commission officials caution landowners against selling their timber just because their trees have been flooded. Most forest stands beyond seedling sizes typically survive short-term flooding. Seedlings that were submerged for a week or more are less likely to survive, officials say. Forest landowners should continue to monitor all forested areas that have been flooded for tree health issues over the next year, they said, and consult a registered forester if they have questions or concerns.

The South Carolina Forestry Commission has created a special section on the home page of its website at www.trees.sc.gov to both collect and provide information for those affected by the flooding. There are links to information about possible disaster assistance for individuals and businesses, research about the effects of trees submerged in water and details of the assessment the agency is conducting.

Why you didn't see Mount Pleasant's mayor on CNN

By Andy Owens

[Charleston Regional Business Journal](#), Oct. 16, 2015

During the height of the recent flooding, Mount Pleasant Mayor Linda Page received a call asking if she would do an interview with CNN about what her town was experiencing.

Mount Pleasant received more rain than any other community in South Carolina during the recent weather event. The National Weather Service reported that nearly 27 inches fell East of the Cooper during the three days that led to flooding across the Midlands and Lowcountry.

Before, during and after the storm, a lot of national media descended on South Carolina, including NBC News, The Weather Channel and CNN, among others.

“Of course, they were looking for a bunch of gloom and doom,” Page said. “I said I would be more than happy to do an interview with CNN.”

Page, who recounted this story during a town council meeting Tuesday night, had already praised the town’s staff for keeping the 25 miles of canals and ditches free of debris to reduce the threat of flooding. One Mount Pleasant resident later recounted seeing a town vehicle and workers clearing the ditch outside of his house during the heaviest downpour.

“They did a pre-interview where I reported that this community had spent a million dollars on infrastructure repair and storm water management, and the water was flowing and the ditches were clean,” she said. “We had a few flooded garages, but we were in great shape.”

She then delivered the news:

“Needless to say, Linda Page did not get an interview with CNN.”

FEMA Disaster Recovery Centers remain open over the weekend

By Mandy Noell

[NBC 32 WMBF Myrtle Beach=Florence](#), Oct. 16, 2015

CONWAY, SC (WMBF) - Representatives with FEMA remain in Horry County to help people who were affected by the floods and continue to suffer flooding. The Disaster Recovery Centers continue to stay open seven days a week, from 8 a.m. through 7 p.m. and will be staffed to help Horry County citizens, according to Horry County officials.

The two DRC's FEMA is operating in Horry County are at the North Strand Recreation Center in Little River, and the South Strand Recreation Center in Myrtle Beach.

The DRC's can help if you need answers to questions, referrals to agencies that may be unable to provide further assistance, housing assistance and rental information, crisis counseling, disaster related legal services, disaster related unemployment, assistance through the Small Business Administration, status of applications being processed by FEMA, and other services.

FEMA urges people who haven't registered for assistance to call 800-621-3362 and FEMA field inspectors will go to those properties to do a damage assessment within 2-10 days. You do not have to wait for an inspector to begin clean-up.

Important: FEMA field inspectors carry credentials (IDs) so they can be identified. If you want to be sure a FEMA representative is authentic, call Horry County Emergency Management for verification at 843-915-5150.

There may be disaster survivors affected by the flooding that applied and got a letter from FEMA saying they are ineligible for disaster assistance. If that happens, do not panic. It could be that FEMA needs more information. The applicant may still need to return insurance information, provide information to prove occupancy or ownership of the damaged property, fill out all necessary paperwork or complete and return the US Small Business Administration loan application.

Applicants with insurance should contact their insurance company and ask for a settlement letter detailing exactly what is covered under their claim. They should mail insurance settlement information to FEMA – Individuals & Households Program, National Processing Service Center, P.O. Box 10055, Hyattsville, MD 20782-7055.

Flood survivors have up to 12 months from the date they registered with FEMA to submit insurance information for review. FEMA cannot provide money to individuals or households for losses already covered by insurance.

FEMA reminds applicants to return the completed SBA loan application even if they choose to decline the loan. Completing the loan application is a necessary step if applicants are to be considered for some other forms of disaster assistance.

Applicants who wish to appeal a decision may do so in writing within 60 days from the date the ineligibility letter was received. Guidelines for appeals can be found in the Applicant's Handbook sent to everyone who registered with FEMA.

Train Traffic Through Fort Mill to Double

[Fort Mill Times](#), October 16, 2015

People living and working along the rail lines that run through Fort Mill will notice a lot more train traffic in the coming weeks.

October's historic flooding in key areas across the state has disabled miles of rail lines. The main lines and several bridges between Columbia and Spartanburg have been badly damaged. As a result, Norfolk Southern Railroad is rerouting BMW shipments from the Spartanburg plant and traffic to and from the Port of Charleston through Fort Mill and Charlotte.

All the rerouting is expected to at least double the train traffic through Fort Mill. The additional trains will mean more delays for drivers. Town Councilwoman Gynn Savage said she and other town leaders are asking for everyone's patience as the potential for traffic delays increases.

"The reroute is absolutely necessary for those businesses and those areas in the Columbia and lower part of the state that were affected by the floods," she said.

Savage asked that residents plan ahead and allow for enough time to reach their destination.

Councilman Tom Adams said people in Fort Mill are fortunate if traffic delays are the worst impact they experience from South Carolina's historic flooding.

"It may cost some small inconvenience, but compared to what they're going through in Columbia I think that we're getting off pretty decent," he said.

Both Savage and Adams are running in November's election to succeed Fort Mill Mayor Danny Funderbutk, whose term expires at the end of the year.

Norfolk Southern estimated service could be impacted for up to three weeks. Most other key routes throughout the state have been restored, according to the railroad's representatives.

AAA Carolinas warns car-buyers of flood damaged vehicles for sale

By Mandy Noell

[NBC 32 WMBF Florence=Myrtle Beach](#), Oct. 16, 2015

MYRTLE BEACH, SC (WMBF) - If you're in the market for a new car, something that needs to be on your mind is the recent flooding that left many vehicles damaged. AAA Carolinas had a warning for car-buyers Friday- to be aware flood-damaged vehicles will be for sale soon.

As cleanup continues, AAA Carolinas said car-buyers should know how to avoid buying a vehicle that might look great, but could be suffering from flood damage.

Vehicles that are damaged in flooding are often totaled by insurance companies, then sold to salvage companies. Those are, in turn, sometimes bought by people who restore them with varying levels of expertise.

"Fresh paint, new upholstery and that 'new-car smell' can mask flood damage," said Greg Pence, Auto Buying Manager for AAA Carolinas. "While services like CarFax can be a good resource for buyers, the only true way of knowing whether a vehicle has suffered flood damage is to have a certified mechanic inspect the vehicle."

Tips on How to Spot a Flood-Damaged Vehicle:

Engage your sense of smell to detect any damp or musty odors inside the vehicle.

Are the windows fogged up? Has the carpet or upholstery been replaced or recently shampooed? Pull back the

carpet at different areas and look for mud, dirt or signs of water stains.

Inspect the dashboard underside for signs of mud and dirt. This is a particularly hard area to clean.

Look under the vehicle for corrosion. It is uncommon to find corrosion in newer vehicles and those that are owned or sold in southern states.

Open all doors, hood, and trunk to inspect for corrosion, mud and dirt or discoloration on the door frames, hinges and under the weather stripping. Pay special attention to small spaces and crevices that are difficult to clean.

Check all warning lights, window motors, and all electrical components to ensure they are working properly. While a non-working part alone does not mean the vehicle was flooded, it combined with other difficulties is a cause for concern.

The best protection, AAA Carolinas said, is to obtain a thorough pre-purchase inspection by a qualified shop.

SCHUYLER KROPF: Floods an opportunity for road reform, environmental advocacy says

[The Post and Courier](#) (Charleston), Oct. 15, 2015

Advocacy groups are using the devastation from this month's record flooding to argue that the best response to fix the state's transportation woes is to bring existing roads up to standards, not build new ones.

The Coastal Conservation League, which opposes the expansion of Interstate 526 across James and Johns islands, says the flooding exposed the vulnerability and weaknesses of the state's current infrastructure in ways never seen before.

"Let's not make the same mistakes we've been making for the last two or three decades," said Executive Director Dana Beach.

With the early damage cost projections pegged at reaching more than \$1 billion, Beach said the Legislature's focus when it addresses the damage in January should be making an open commitment to financially commit to strengthening the existing map, not adding to it.

That includes storm-proofing low-lying areas.

"What the storm revealed is there are lots of roads vulnerable to being flooded," he said, adding it would be a cost savings to bolster them now than to re-do them following another catastrophe.

The league is trying to build support for making transportation reform a top issue for 2016, even as similar efforts failed last year when road the situation was again characterized as critical. The group on Thursday launched a petition drive calling on the House and Senate to pass a bill that calls for repairs over new construction; reform that gives all communities equal representation on transportation bodies; and commits dollars to projects based on traffic and safety data "instead of politics."

State leaders are still formulating how they will respond to the roads portion of the disaster, first asking for an assessment of damages. House Speaker Jay Lucas has instructed the House's budget writing panel to look into disaster costs and hearings with Ways and Means Committee members and state agency officials are planned. The state's most powerful lawmaker, Senate President Pro Tem Sen. Hugh Leatherman, R-Florence, has already warned that recovery costs would have a "horrendous" impact on the state budget.

State Sen. Chip Campsen, R-Isle of Palms, said it may be too early to predict what will happen, or what the political mood is in the Statehouse, until everyone returns to Columbia. But he warned that money will be tight and could be eaten up just getting the state's roads back to their pre-storm condition.

The one difference is that the damage was worse in the central part of the state than it was along the coast. "Maybe there will be an impetus" for reform, he said.

Bluffton businesses, volunteers continue to help with flood relief

By DEEANNA WILKERSON

[Bluffton Today](#), October 16, 2015

Two weeks after heavy rains caused widespread flooding across 20 counties in South Carolina, Bluffton business owners and volunteers continue to join in recovery efforts.

The latest initiative is to provide temporary housing called "tiny homes" to at least two families in need. Ben Kennedy, president of Brighton Builders, said it's a way for his company and the public to help those who have been displaced from their homes.

"As I was gathering supplies to send to our neighbors impacted by the flood, I realized that I was not utilizing my greatest strength: building. This is when I came up with the idea to build tiny homes for families whose lives were affected by the flooding," Kennedy said.

Kennedy said only 9 percent of homes in South Carolina are covered under the National Flood Insurance Program, forcing people to rebuild their homes using their own savings. Tiny homes can help relieve that burden.

At only 200 square feet, tiny homes can sleep four to six people and have all the amenities of a home, including bedrooms, a bathroom and a kitchen with running water and electricity.

Kennedy said he will work with churches and municipalities in hard-hit areas to identify families in need of temporary housing. The homes will be built on wheels so they can be transported to families while they rebuild their homes or seek new housing.

Brighton Builders, the town of Bluffton and the Hilton Head Island-Bluffton Chamber of Commerce held a groundbreaking ceremony for the tiny homes Thursday at 1321 May River Road.

Each tiny home costs \$20,000-\$30,000 and the public is asked to donate toward the initial goal of \$50,000 by visiting a GoFundMe page at blufftoncares.com. Donations beyond that will go toward more tiny homes.

“We don’t want to stop at two. We hope we can build more than two,” Kennedy said.

Unsung heroes

Mayor Lisa Sulka said volunteers like Kennedy and many others are the unsung heroes of Bluffton.

Soon after the flooding occurred, Bluffton officials and business owners began their efforts to help victims across the state. The town initiated a water and paper goods drive, which business owners and volunteers were quick to join.

“They don’t want you to call them heroes, but if you look up the definition of a hero, it’s the good deeds that people like this do,” Sulka said of the volunteers who have spent countless hours collecting and distributing donated items.

Gerrick Taylor of Taylor’s Quality Landscape Supply, Inc. has made a dozen or more trips to Richland, Dorchester, Clarendon and Williamsburg counties to supply items to flood victims.

Tom Curry of Lowcountry Paver set up a trailer at the Publix parking lot at Buckwalter Place to provide an additional drop-off site for the town’s collection. So far, the company has provided about six tractor trailer loads of items to the Columbia and Charleston areas.

In addition, Mitch and Bill Brown, Bill and Tony Nimmer of Nimmer Turf Farm, Charlie Dean of Dean Custom Air, Mark Kramer of Palatial Homes Design in Hilton Head, Josh Sigler of Palmetto Towing, the Bluffton Police Department and Alan Ulmer of Ulmer Brothers have contributed by collecting items and driving trucks to distribution sites across the state.

Messex One Stop Service and Sheffield Old Company are donating a full tank of gas for trucks en route to deliver donations for flood victims.

Schools and private groups also have reached out to help, including Red Cedar Elementary School students who collected water items for distribution and Cross Schools, which donated \$1,000 to the cause.

Helping pets

A Bluffton-based business is helping the furry residents of flooded areas as well.

Dave Ropes, co-founder of mobiPET, has teamed up with the American Humane Association’s Red Star Rescue Program to help residents in and around Columbia find their lost pets. People who have a photo of their missing pet on their smartphone or computer can go to mobipet.me and fill out information to send out a visual “amber alert” for their pet.

MobiPET has waived the \$50 fee normally associated with nonregistered pet owners who have lost a pet in the Columbia area.

“One of the problems we’re having is the fact that a lot of the animal shelters were flooded out and the animals were then transported to another area in the region,” Ropes said.

Any local animal shelters that have taken in lost animals from flooded areas are asked to get in touch with mobiPET or the Red Star Rescue Program if they know the zip code from which the animal came. For more information, contact dave@mobipet.me.

OPINION: Let's not be lulled once again into ignoring the awesome might of Mother Nature

A Reminder

By Dwayne Green

[Charleston City Paper](#), Oct. 14, 2015

In Charleston, we dodged a bullet given the relatively minor damage we received last week from Hurricane Joaquin, which helped funnel a ceaseless stream of precipitation across South Carolina. Relatively speaking, we were blessed. Despite receiving the equivalent of four months of rainfall in just a few days, the Charleston area was largely spared from the worst after-effects of Hurricane Joaquin's wake.

Other than some street closures and some flooding in low-lying areas, we emerged from the weekend deluge

relatively unscathed while some of our fellow South Carolinians continue to deal with water shortages, road washouts, dam breeches, and swollen rivers. Our relative good fortune should be enough for us to give thanks early and often. More importantly, it should remind us once again to recognize the devastating power of Mother Nature — particularly when it involves something as powerful as a hurricane.

Since Hurricane Hugo nearly 30 years ago, many of us have lost the healthy fear that the people of the Lowcountry acquired in the immediate aftermath of that devastating storm. When Hugo slammed into the Charleston coastline, our area experienced what it truly means to be ground zero when a Category 4 hurricane strikes — bringing with it widespread destruction rivaling that of a war zone. After the immediate devastation of Hugo, Charleston was understandably shell-shocked, and it stayed that way for years. In fact, the area went into evacuation mode whenever another hurricane even looked as if it was headed our way.

Like me, I'm sure that many of you vividly recall the evacuations ordered by former South Carolina governors Jim Hodges and David Beasley and the jam-packed highways where thousands of cars would crawl at a snail's pace to escape the coming threat, only to see limited rainfall and mild winds occur post-evacuation. Since Hugo — and even more devastating calamities in Florida, New Orleans, and New Jersey — our region has largely been spared the devastating impact of a direct tropical storm strike, much less a hurricane, and so that fear has largely slipped away, even among the members of our Congressional delegation.

Today, the federal government is stepping in to assist our region in the form of FEMA relief for those without flood insurance, something many of our legislators in Congress opposed when Hurricane Sandy struck the Northeast but which they now ask for in their own state. But as resistant as South Carolina and its representatives in Washington have been to receiving federal funds of any type, this is a situation where the assistance is sorely needed, regardless of whether we should take them to task for their hypocrisy.

Every natural disaster is a test of our area's preparedness and our underlying infrastructure. In this instance, the Charleston area passed the test with flying colors. And other than the extended school and road closures everything was nearly business as usual for most Charlestonians days after the heavy rains subsided, unlike our neighbors in the Midlands who are, as of this writing, still without clean water. But this should not lull us into a false sense of complacency.

It is still hurricane season, and there is the potential that more could be coming our way. The misery visited on our fellow South Carolinians could very well be ours the next time. For that reason, an ounce of prevention is worth more than a pound of cure.

Dwayne Green is a licensed attorney practicing in Charleston. He is a former assistant attorney for the City of Charleston, and graduated from Princeton University with a degree in politics and the University of Iowa College of Law.

OPINION: Lawmakers need to know situation before they return

[The Times and Democrat](#) (Orangeburg), October 16, 2015

South Carolina lawmakers know the state will be looking to them for leadership in recovery from the unprecedented flooding of October 2015. There is urgency in addressing issues such as repairing roads and bridges. But there is wisdom in a prudent approach.

Amid the calls by some for lawmakers to return to Columbia for a special session, the governor and legislative leaders are saying haste is not the right approach.

Senate President Pro Tempore Hugh Leatherman of Florence says the resumption of the regular legislative session in January will be soon enough for lawmakers to address the flooding aftermath.

While that may seem like a long time to wait in a “crisis,” it is likely to take at least that long to make an accurate assessment regarding the extent of the problems.

Gov. Nikki Haley agrees, saying there is not enough information available to call lawmakers into special session now.

While Leatherman says dealing with the flood will be the top priority when lawmakers return, the leadership on the other side of the Statehouse is taking steps to ensure representatives are ready to go in January. Getting information is the first step.

House Speaker Jay Lucas of Darlington said Wednesday the Ways and Means Committee will in coming weeks hold hearings to assess the impact of flooding and the potential cost of recovery.

“The historic flood that devastated our state nearly two weeks ago proves once again that when South Carolinians are faced with adversity, we prevail. Gov. Nikki Haley, Adjutant General Bob Livingston and the rest of Team South Carolina kept our families as safe as possible and prevented our communities from further destruction. As we move forward with the recovery process, the House will take a proactive approach to ensure that South Carolina bounces back from this disaster as quickly as possible,” Lucas said.

LETTER: Fix infrastructure or pay the price

The Post and Courier (Charleston), Oct. 16, 2015

The tragic events from the terrible rainstorm should be a wakeup call to the governor, both chambers of the Legislature and our congressmen — that ignoring state infrastructure needs comes at a huge price. I am not saying that if we had a 21st century infrastructure the state would have been spared all the devastation. But what can be stated is that the disgraceful condition of our roads, dams, waterways, water systems and the like made a very bad situation very much worse.

Now all these same politicians will be demanding that the federal government step up to the plate. Keep in mind, many of our congressional delegation voted against aid to people and communities impacted by Sandy. In any case, they will expect the nation to bail out South Carolina.

This state and our elected leaders need to realize that the lack of investment in our infrastructure comes with a price. We are all paying for it.

With ocean levels rising and weather patterns changing, we should expect more water problems more often.

If our elected officials continue down the same path they walked before this storm, we will experience the same results in future storms.

Remember: Everyone hates government until we need it.

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