



FEMA

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News Release

12 Days of Hurricane Matthew Recovery Tips for Survivors

DURHAM, N.C. – Many displaced Hurricane Matthew survivors face a challenging holiday season. Governor Pat McCrory has called a special session of the legislature to address pressing needs. But there is much that survivors and supporters can do to advance the recovery process.

North Carolina Emergency Management and the Federal Emergency Management Agency suggest the following **12 Days of Hurricane Matthew Recovery Tips** for people who are recovering from the October storm.

- 1. Register with FEMA before the Jan. 9, 2017, deadline.** While not everyone affected by Hurricane Matthew will be eligible for disaster relief, you won't know for sure until you register. Register online at DisasterAssistance.gov, download the [FEMA app](#), or call 800-621-3362 for voice, 711 and Video Relay Service. If you are deaf, hard of hearing or have a speech disability and use a TTY, call 800-462-7585. The service is available from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. daily. Multilingual operators are available.
- 2. If you receive a low-interest disaster loan application from the U.S. Small Business Administration, complete it before the Jan. 9, 2017, deadline to keep the federal assistance process moving.** You do not have to accept a loan. If you do not qualify for the loan, you may be eligible for FEMA grant money.
- 3. Initiate or update a claim with your insurance agent.** Contact your insurance agent to learn what is covered through your homeowner's or renter's plan, as well as flood insurance, if applicable. Be sure to document valuables and other property too damaged to salvage. Provide FEMA with your insurance documentation and provide updates when you receive an insurance settlement. Grants may be available to help with losses not covered by insurance.

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4. **Plan now for long term housing needs.** FEMA's Transitional Sheltering Assistance program, which provides hotel accommodations for survivors unable to live in damaged property, is scheduled to end Jan. 7, 2017. NCHousingSearch.org helps people displaced by Hurricane Matthew locate available, affordable rental housing. Call Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 8 p.m., at 877-428-8844. The FEMA Housing Portal (<https://asd.fema.gov/inter/hportal/home.htm>) is another housing resource.
5. **Learn about options to rebuild stronger at home improvement stores.** FEMA mitigation representatives are available at home improvement stores in many communities to provide information on making homes safer and stronger. For stores near you, visit www.fema.gov/disaster/4285.
6. **Save receipts and keep good records.** Save receipts from all disaster-related repairs. It is important to retain proof of all legitimate expenditures as it could affect eligibility for additional assistance.
7. **Be aware of scams.** Don't let your guard down and suffer another disaster such as identity theft or paying fees for services that are never provided. FEMA does not charge for services nor does it endorse any contractors. Use licensed local contractors with reliable references and require proof of insurance. If you suspect fraud, call the North Carolina consumer hotline at 919-716-6000.
8. **Salvage damaged family treasures.** Damaged family heirlooms, photos and other keepsakes can be among the most heartbreaking discoveries following a major disaster. While some objects can only be rescued with professional care, the Heritage Emergency National Task Force offers [basic guidelines](#) for ways to restore treasures. Likewise, the North Carolina Museum of History shares tips on how to care for [delicate artifacts](#).
9. **Holidays can add to disaster-related stress.** Coping with the aftermath of a disaster can be especially difficult during the holiday season. Suspect stress in children who may complain of stomachaches, nervousness, trouble sleeping or experience bouts of anger. The NC State Extension Service offers tips for [children](#) and [adults](#).
10. **Free legal services are available to flood survivors.** A toll-free legal aid hotline is staffed weekdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. by volunteer North Carolina lawyers. Advice is available on such topics as home repair contracts, working with contractors, and replacing wills or other legal documents that were lost or severely damaged. Call 800-662-7407 and ask for Disaster Legal Services.

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11. **Volunteer resources may be available for unmet needs.** North Carolina's Long Term Recovery Committees help in connecting resource providers with unmet needs in communities affected by Hurricane Matthew. To request help, or to donate time or resources, visit the North Carolina Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster website at ncvoad.org.
12. **Donate to those who lost essential and familiar possessions.** Contribute through your favorite charity or text your donation to 30306 to aid the North Carolina Disaster Relief Fund for Hurricane Matthew.

Additional details and information are available at FEMA.gov/Disaster/4285.

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Disaster recovery assistance is available without regard to race, color, religion, nationality, sex, age, disability, English proficiency or economic status. If you or someone you know has been discriminated against, call FEMA toll-free at 800-621-3362 or TTY at 800-462-7585.

FEMA's mission is to support our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards. Follow FEMA on twitter at [@femaregion4](https://twitter.com/femaregion4). Download the FEMA app with tools and tips to keep you safe before, during, and after disasters.

Dial 2-1-1 or 888-892-1162 to speak with a trained call specialist about questions you have regarding Hurricane Matthew; the service is free, confidential and available in any language. They can help direct you to resources. Call 5-1-1 or 877-511-4662 for the latest road conditions or check the ReadyNC mobile app, which also has real-time shelter and evacuation information. For updates on Hurricane Matthew impacts and relief efforts, go to ReadyNC.org or follow N.C. Emergency Management on [Twitter](https://twitter.com/ncem) and [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/ncem). People or organizations that want to help ensure North Carolina recovers can visit NCdisasterrelief.org or text NCRecovers to 30306.

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) is the federal government's primary source of money for the long-term rebuilding of disaster-damaged private property. SBA helps homeowners, renters, businesses of all sizes, and private non-profit organizations fund repairs or rebuilding efforts and cover the cost of replacing lost or disaster-damaged personal property. These disaster loans cover losses not fully compensated by insurance or other recoveries and do not duplicate benefits of other agencies or organizations. For more information, applicants may contact SBA's Customer Service Center by calling 800-659-2955, emailing disastercustomerservice@sba.gov, or visiting SBA's Web site at www.sba.gov/disaster. Deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals may call 800-877-8339.