



BERTIE COUNTY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 4, 2019

Bertie County moving full steam ahead in preparing for Hurricane Dorian

Vulnerable populations a top concern, shelters slated to open tomorrow, County curfew scheduled

WINDSOR, NC – A familiar drill is underway here today. Bertie County is no stranger to hurricanes and storm activity. Readiness has become second nature to Mother Nature.

Vulnerable populations in need of special assistance are being asked to be diligent in their preparations for what may be to come from Hurricane Dorian. For those citizens who serve as caregivers for relatives or others in the community, especially those who would require special needs in the event of power outages, Bertie County Emergency Services is sharing valuable information about how those patients should proceed if they need to seek a County shelter.

“Safety of our most vulnerable is our utmost priority,” said Bertie County Emergency Services Director, Mitch Cooper.

“If in fact the patient does have special medical needs that require special arrangements, including transportation, those patients should call the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) immediately to verify qualifications for a state medical shelter. The call should be made before the storm. This is for patients who live alone without primary caregivers, and no access or ability to evacuate, if needed.”

Mr. Cooper advised that the sooner the County is aware of the need, the better, as space in state medical shelters is very limited. Those citizens who believe they fit the criteria of having special medical needs are asked to call the Emergency Operations Center at 252-794-6370.

“If a patient does not have special medical needs requiring a stay in a state medical storm shelter, a care giver must stay with the patient in the shelter for as long as the patient needs to remain in the shelter,” he continued.

A curfew will also be in effect beginning tomorrow night as part of the County State of Emergency. The curfew will be in place from 9:00 PM until 5:00 AM. The curfew will be enforced beginning tomorrow night until further notice from the County.

The County is currently under a State of Emergency until further notice.

In an update distributed by the National Hurricane Center today, Hurricane Dorian's track has shifted westward. With this shift, Bertie is expected to see an increase in rain fall and dangerous wind speeds. Rain totals are expected to range between 8 and 10 inches and wind gusts of 70 + MPH are also expected. The main impacts from this event are slated to begin Thursday evening and last through late afternoon on Friday.

Bertie County will open three storm shelters at noon tomorrow, September 5th.

Those shelters include Bertie High School (pet friendly) located at 715 US Hwy 13 North in Windsor. For the western part of the County, West Bertie Elementary located at 3734 Governors Road in Kelford will be at the ready. For those on the eastern side of the County needing to evacuate their homes, Colerain Elementary will also be staffed and is located at 202 N Academy St, Colerain, NC 27924.

Citizens planning to stay in any of the County shelters should bring all essential items including pillows, blankets, medications, toiletries and hygiene supplies. Shelters will provide food and water. Cots will only be available while supplies last. If a resident would like to bring a cot or air mattress, they are welcome to do so.

Bertie High School will serve as a pet friendly shelter. Pet owners should bring **all needed supplies for their pets** including pet food, water bowls, kennels and necessary material for cleaning up pet waste. Pets must remain on a leash, or kept in kennels at all times. Pet areas will be set up away from the general population.

Shelters will have 24-hour security surveillance, and shelter residents are required to check in and out with appropriate staff during the duration of their stay at the shelter.

Republic Services has also elected to close all Bertie County convenience sites tomorrow and Friday.

Bertie County Government Offices and Bertie County Public Schools will also be closed tomorrow and Friday.

Please monitor Bertie County affiliated Facebook pages for all of the latest information, as well as NC Emergency Management, and other local media outlets.

Any reports of damage or road conditions in Bertie County should be reported to the Emergency Operations Center at 252-794-6370. Non-emergency calls can also be directed to the Bertie County Sheriff's Office at 252-794-5330. Emergencies should be reported by calling 911.

All media requests can be submitted to Bertie County Emergency Services Director, Mitch Cooper, by first contacting the Emergency Operations Center at 252-794-6370.

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