

The Costs of Responding to Tropical Storm Helene in North Carolina

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HICKORY, N.C. – Debris removal. Restoration of utilities. Emergency repairs to public bridges and water systems. Overtime costs for emergency personnel. Evacuation support. Transportation of supplies for the public.

These are some of the costs the state of North Carolina and communities in Western North Carolina experienced for emergency response to Tropical Storm Helene. FEMA is reimbursing most of those costs through its Public Assistance Program. More than 2,300 projects have been submitted to Public Assistance and are in process.

“The state and FEMA continue to work together to provide the much-needed assistance to those communities impacted by Tropical Storm Helene and to help them with the costs associated with responding to this unprecedented storm,” said North Carolina Emergency Management Director Will Ray. “We recognize there is a long road ahead but through a whole of community approach we will get there.”

Since January, here are some of the FEMA grants provided to the state and communities:

French Broad Electric Membership Corporation: \$8,694,790 for costs of restoring emergency power. The funding reimburses the utility for work in Buncombe, Haywood, Madison, McDowell, Mitchell and Yancey counties. Emergency work included restoration of gauges, poles, transformers, conductor wires, crossarms and associated hardware as well as removal of debris affecting the power system.

North Carolina Highway Patrol: \$3,352,651 for costs for emergency protective measures, including personnel overtime, evacuations, water rescues, transportation of supplies for the public, placement of barricades, and other activities.



North Carolina Department of Transportation: \$33 million for emergency replacement of public bridges in Alleghany, Ashe, Buncombe, Burke, Caldwell, Haywood, Henderson, McDowell, Mitchell, Yancey and Watauga counties.

Town of Spruce Pine: \$2,609,254 for permanent repairs to the wastewater treatment plant.

Town of Burnsville: \$1,160,571 for emergency protective measures, including establishment of a temporary raw water intake system.

Madison County: \$1,636,697 for emergency protective measures, including placement of six modular units at the Sprinkle Shelton Building and the Madison County Courthouse.

Town of Spruce Pine: \$1,845,849 for permanent repairs at the Riverside Park pedestrian bridge.

Rutherford County: \$7,643,529 for debris removal.

Cleveland County: \$3,854,825 for debris removal.

Town of Biltmore Forest: \$2,022,931 for debris removal.

North Carolina Emergency Management: \$6,709,159 for personnel, contractual support and other support expenses related to Tropical Storm Helene.

These large projects are among \$135 million provided since January. Since the disaster declaration in September, 373 projects have been obligated for \$451.8 million.

