

# Biden-Harris Administration Approves Federal Assistance for North Carolina, Urges Safety Precautions Throughout Southeast

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**Release Date: August 7, 2024**

WASHINGTON -- As Tropical Storm Debby continues to impact communities across the Southeast, President Biden approved an emergency declaration for North Carolina, which authorizes FEMA to provide federal assistance to save lives, protect property and public health and safety.

The Biden-Harris Administration urges those in the storm's path to take the necessary precautions. This slow-moving storm may bring life-threatening hazards including historic rainfall, leading to catastrophic flooding across Florida, Georgia, South Carolina and North Carolina through Friday.

FEMA is working closely with federal, state, tribal and local officials, coordinating efforts and resources to respond effectively to the challenges posed by this severe weather event. Over 700 FEMA staff and federal partners are deployed in Florida, Georgia, South Carolina and North Carolina. Search and Rescue Teams and swift water rescue assets stand ready to assist as needed. Additionally, FEMA's National Response Coordination Center (NRCC) in Washington, D.C. and the Regional Response Coordination Center (RRCC) in Atlanta have been activated in support of the impacted states and anticipate any needs they may have. FEMA has actively delivered more than 1 million meals and nearly 1.5 million liters of water to Florida, with additional supplies on the way. FEMA's Atlanta distribution center is fully stocked and prepared to distribute commodities across impacted areas should they request additional support.

FEMA remains committed to supporting all affected areas and prioritizing the safety and well-being of everyone in the storm's path.

**People Experiencing Flooding from Debby Should Take Action to Stay Safe**



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**Stay safe and be aware of flood risks.** Do not walk, swim or drive through flood waters as it may be contaminated and contain dangerous debris. Additionally, underground or downed power lines can electrically charge the water. Turn Around, Don't Drown! Remember, just 6 inches of moving water can knock you down and one foot of moving water can sweep your vehicle away. Stay off bridges over fast-moving water and never drive around barricades. Local responders use them to safely direct traffic out of flooded areas.

**Be ready to evacuate.** Excessive rainfall may cause waters to rise rapidly, so you may need to evacuate with little notice. Residents and visitors should pay attention to local officials and heed any guidance, warnings or instructions as risk of flooding continues over the coming days. To find an open shelter, you can text the word SHELTER and your zip code to 43362 to search for shelters near you and for Spanish speakers text REFUGIO and your zip code to 43362.

**Use generators safely.** Always use them outdoors and at least 20 feet from windows, doors and attached garages. Make sure to keep the generator dry and protected from rain or flooding.

**Flooding can affect power systems, as utility companies may shut down portion of the electrical grid.** If the power goes out, use only flashlights or battery-powered lanterns for emergency lighting. Never use candles during a blackout or power outage due to extreme risk of fire.

**Stay away from power and communications lines.** Communication lines carry vital messages including 911 and emergency services and provide access to the internet. Call your utility providers directly to report down or cut lines and stay clear of the area.

**Stay off the roads.** This will help first responders and utility companies get help to those who need it most. If you evacuated, do not return home until local officials say it is safe to do so.

**Document any property damage.** If you're able to safely do so, take photos and contact your insurance company right away for assistance and next steps.

**Use caution when cleaning up.** Wear protective clothing, including a long-sleeved shirt, long pants, work gloves and sturdy thick-soled shoes. Do not try to



remove heavy debris by yourself. Use an appropriate mask if cleaning mold or other debris. People with asthma and other lung conditions and/or immune suppression should not enter buildings with indoor water leaks or mold growth that can be seen or smelled. Children should not take part in disaster cleanup work.

You can find more information on how to prepare for the incoming storm and how to stay safe at [Ready.gov](https://www.ready.gov) or [Listo.gov](https://www.listo.gov) in Spanish language. You can also [download the free FEMA App](#) in both English and Spanish languages to locate open shelters and receive alerts for up to five areas.



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