



For Immediate Release:
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News Release

GEMA/HS, state and local agencies responding to Hurricane Irma

(ATLANTA) – As Hurricane Irma makes its way through the state, initial reports indicate that areas of coastal Georgia are experiencing historic levels of flooding. Impacts are being felt throughout the state with tropical storm force winds and heavy rainfall downing trees and increasing the chance of flash flooding.

Residents are urged to shelter in place if it is safe to do so. Evacuees should not attempt to return home as there are significant damages to roadways, power and water resources in Georgia and Florida. Red Cross and good samaritan shelters have available space for people who may need to evacuate from coastal counties due to severe flooding. Residents should contact their local officials for guidance and information about evacuations. A current list of shelters can be found on the GEMA/HS public website or by contacting your local emergency management agency.

As of 2:30 pm today more than 923,000 customers were without power across the state of Georgia. With the widespread power outages, GEMA/HS is receiving a large number of requests for generators from local governments and is working to fulfill these and other requests for assistance. Once the storm passes, resources will be directed to impacted areas. Personnel from multiple state agencies, including Georgia Department of Transportation, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Georgia Forestry Commission and the Georgia Department of Defense, are prepared to provide response and recovery support to affected areas once the storm passes.

Officials understand that Florida and Georgia evacuees are anxious to return home and ask for everyone's patience as we work to ensure it is safe to do so. State and local officials will keep the public updated as more information is available.

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As part of the Office of the Governor, GEMA/HS works with local, state and federal governments, in partnership with the private sector and faith-based community, to protect life and property against man-made and natural emergencies. In addition, GEMA/HS employees are on 24-hour call statewide to assist local authorities when disaster strikes. GEMA/HS's Ready Georgia campaign helps Georgians prepare for disasters. Go to www.ready.ga.gov or download the free Ready Georgia app for information on developing custom emergency plans and Ready kits.