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Harford County Executive

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Harford County Sends Emergency Response Team to Help North Carolina Community With Hurricane Helene Recovery

BEL AIR, Md., (Oct. 10, 2024) - Harford County sent an emergency response team to North Carolina last week following Hurricane Helene to help local officials develop a plan for the ravaged community to follow during its prolonged recovery efforts.

Since September 30, the team — comprised of one emergency planner from the Harford County Department of Emergency Services and three deputies from the Harford County Sheriff's Office — has worked to help develop the recovery plan for Rutherford County, which includes the municipalities of Lake Lure and Chimney Rock.

The area has faced extensive damage to its infrastructure, including power grids and water and sewer systems. When the Harford team arrived, they joined numerous rescue missions, working from mountaintops, rivers and various buildings to support local efforts.

In two days, the Harford team helped establish a unified command at an emergency operations center (EOC), bringing together all relevant parties, including law enforcement, fire departments, search and rescue teams, National Guard representatives and local government officials, to streamline communication and coordination.

Over the past week, the Harford team has overseen daily incident operations, guiding local officials through the processes for requesting resources and determining necessary supplies. The

team has also engaged with community members seeking information on the restoration of power and water and sewer services, and other essential commodities needed for long-term recovery.

“The Harford County team has been so vitally important to our recovery. I don’t think we could have done this without them,” Kerry Giles, public information officer for Rutherford County, said. “They set structure, clarified roles within the EOC and lifted the burden off our own emergency management staff so they could deal with problems that were quickly arising. Their knowledge, understanding, and experience have been invaluable.”

“We’ve all seen the devastation caused by Hurricane Helene, so when the call came for help, Harford County was proud to answer the call,” County Executive Bob Cassilly said. “I would like to thank our emergency response team for leaving their homes and families to share their expertise and assist our fellow Americans in crisis. Please continue to keep the victims and their families in your prayers.”

For information on how you can help the victims of Hurricane Helene, visit the county government website at <https://www.harfordcountymd.gov/3082/Hurricane-Assistance---How-Can-I-Help>



Photo caption: Harford County Emergency Planner Dan McKinney, left, along with Major Eric Gonzalez, Senior Deputy TJ Jackson, and Lieutenant Scott Blankenship from the Harford County Sheriff's Office were the Harford County team deployed to North Carolina on September 30 to support local officials in the communities devastated by Tropical Storm Helene.

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