



North Carolina Emergency Management **2011 Annual Report**



About NCEM

North Carolina Emergency Management prepares for, responds to, recovers from and mitigates against emergencies and disasters. The division maintains the State Emergency Operations Center, which serves as the command center for coordinating response.

Three regional branch offices and 26 field staff serve as the bridge to local communities, responding to emergencies, helping counties develop response plans and fielding requests for state assets. While the capitol-based staff administer state and federal grants, manage multi-agency disaster response plans, coordinate regional hazard mitigation plans, facilitate training classes and exercise programs and manage state-owned assets such as the regional hazmat response teams and various search and rescue teams.

On January 1, 2012, NCEM became a division of the Department of Public Safety which combined the former departments of Corrections, Crime Control and Public Safety, and Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. As part of North Carolina's largest state agency, NCEM now has additional resources to draw upon during times of crisis.

The NCEM Director is appointed by the governor and reports to the Secretary of Public Safety.



Letter from the Director

Last year was one of the busiest in recent history for disaster response and recovery, not only for our state and nation, but the entire global community.

In North Carolina, we weathered the largest tornado outbreak in state history, the most significant hurricane in more than a decade and three widespread wildfires. We responded to and recovered from three federally-declared disasters and three state disasters. In addition, we partnered with local first responders to search for missing persons, rescue stranded hikers, provide technical support and expertise to hazardous material spills and respond to a number of fires, plane crashes and train wrecks.

Our nation also suffered the worst tornado outbreak on record, with deadly twisters ripping through Alabama, Missouri and the plains states. Floods ravaged parts of the Midwest, while a rare East Coast earthquake in Mineral Springs, Virginia, sent shockwaves through North Carolina and other states, as well as our nation's capital.

The earthquake-tsunami-nuclear event in Japan awakened people to the potential everyday dangers we all face and the importance of being prepared.

At the end of the year, the division moved into a new, state-of-the-art emergency operations center on the campus of the North Carolina National Guard. The new facility brings together for the first time the state's leading response agencies combining Emergency Management and National Guard with the capital-region dispatch center for the State Highway Patrol and the statewide traffic congestion management center.

North Carolina remains one of the most disaster-tested states in the country. But it is that experienced response and recovery team that has helped to create one of the strongest emergency management programs in the country.

Doug Hoell, Director



Supporting Communities, Providing Resources

Whether providing state resources to respond to a widespread disaster or answering the call for technical support and advice, North Carolina Emergency Management staff work alongside communities to keep people and property safe.



In fact, one of the division's primary roles is to provide support and coordinated response to communities and regions. To accomplish this, the state has a variety of resources to augment local response.

Because all disasters start and end locally, the state has positioned 26 field staff members across the state to *provide on-scene support in response to natural disasters*. These employees work daily with first responders, local law enforcement, city and county officials, so they can easily interface with them during emergencies to coordinate local, state and federal assets and provide any necessary operational support to local emergency managers and rescue workers.

They were on the scene:

- As a winter storm struck January 10, dumping up to 17 inches of snow across much of the state before turning to sleet and freezing rain. NCEM employees coordinated equipment and resources and provided staff support to counties.
- When tornadoes broke out in Davidson and Surry counties April 4 destroying homes and businesses. NCEM staff responded to the disaster, then helped local authorities survey the damage the next day.
- Working side-by-side with local emergency management agencies April 16 to coordinate urban search and rescue teams, deploy hazmat response teams, activate chain saw crews, and call in other resources as tornadoes raged across the state.
- After severe weather damaged 10 structures, blocked roads and knocked out power in Rutherford County May 11. NCEM employees responded to the disaster, then helped local teams assess the damage.
- When three separate wildfires raged across four counties, burning more than 77,000 acres in eastern North Carolina from early May to mid-August, NCEM staff served as liaisons between state and local agencies, coordinating resources and providing staff support.
- As Hurricane Irene bore down on eastern North Carolina in late August prompting evacuations in 19 counties. NCEM staff activated the Regional Coordination Center to coordinate resources and equipment to help counties respond to the storm. They continued their support for months after the storm, helping with the recovery efforts.

- When tornadoes swept through Davidson and Randolph counties November 16. NCEM staff quickly helped local officials respond to the event and rapidly surveyed damage to nearly 100 damaged or destroyed homes and businesses.

Those seasoned field staff also *provide on-scene support in response to man-made disasters*. State emergency management personnel were on the scene last year:

- When a fire broke out at a Washington marina January 7 destroying more than two dozen boats.
- To respond to a freight train wreck in Union County May 24.
- To coordinate response to a plane crash in Cherokee County May 25.



In addition, the state's seven hazmat Regional Response Teams responded to 83 requests for assistance in 2011 including:

- Several hydrogen sulfide incidents, also known as detergent suicides.
- An anhydrous ammonia explosion at the Pilgrim's Pride poultry plant in Union County. The plant and area homes were evacuated and nearby freight rail traffic was stopped while RRTs secured the scene.
- Numerous gas leaks, fuel spills and chemical fires.



North Carolina has earned the respect and admiration of other states for its comprehensive Search and Rescue programs. This coordinated resource includes dozens of highly-skilled local rescue technicians who are specially trained to search for victims stranded in the wilderness, trapped by rising floodwaters or raging rivers, or isolated on a mountain cliff. Last year the teams:

- Rescued more than 100 people from flood waters during and after Hurricane Irene.
- Rescued a teen who tumbled off a 200-foot overlook in Caldwell County and got stuck in a tree 150 feet from the bottom.
- Pulled survivors from damaged buildings and vehicles after the statewide tornado outbreak in April.

The NCEM 24-hour operations center is the state's repository for all emergency notifications, including severe weather threats, missing person calls, hazardous materials spills, structure collapse, bomb threats, sewage leaks, water contamination, forest fires, petroleum spills and a variety of other threats. Emergency management officers are available at all hours to respond to resource requests and notify other affected agencies. The 24-hour center answered 3,321 calls. in 2011.

Calls into State EOC

Bomb threat	30
Complaint	64
Fire	61
Hazmat	799
SAR	189
Transportation	46
Wastewater	312
Weather	1680
Other	140
Total	3,321

Partnering for Preparedness

Two critical components of every solid emergency management program include providing frequent training and exercises that test how agencies actually coordinate and respond to disasters. NCEM sponsored more than 270 classes that trained more than 5,350 fire, rescue, law enforcement and emergency management personnel and community leaders how to respond to various types of crises. Courses regularly include disaster response and recovery, managing debris after a disaster, handling mass fatalities, assessing damages from disasters, mass shootings response and managing people in disasters.

In addition to hosting routine courses, NCEM employees planned, coordinated and implemented dozens of local or regional training exercises to provide partners with the opportunity to test their communication, coordination and response skills before an incident occurs. Some of the more noteworthy efforts of 2011 included:

Preparing for hurricanes – Emergency management officials from the state and nine eastern counties rehearsed their abilities to communicate during a hurricane, coordinate assets in the initial response phase, and continue to manage resources for weeks afterward as part of the recovery efforts. During the two-day April exercise, teams also simulated recovery operations, commodities distribution, damage assessment and telephone service disruption that forced responders to use back-up communication. In a separate workshop, more than 100 emergency managers, university faculty and

National Weather Service meteorologists gathered to review current forecasting tools and discuss ways to improve communication and warnings during emergencies. Lessons learned from both these spring training sessions were invaluable as the agencies responded to Hurricane Irene in the fall.



Safeguarding schools – More than 50 teachers, principals, school administrators and first responders participated in a

two-day course to identify potential hazards, mitigate possible damage and develop effective plans to respond to various potential school emergencies. During 2011, 17 counties participated in multi-hazard school emergency planning, which NCEM regularly offers. In addition, nine local and state agencies and more than 100 volunteers participated in a school shooter exercise January 24 in Wake County to test coordinated response capabilities to a planned attack at a local school.

Preparing our communities – Civil Air Patrol members and student cadets trained in the state’s commodity distribution program. Once trained these volunteers, as well as others from community and faith-based groups, could be called upon during a disaster to distribute necessary items such as pre-packaged foods, water and tarps.

Training Community Emergency Response Teams – NCEM developed the first Spanish-speaking CERT class to encourage members of the Hispanic and Latino communities to be self-sufficient during emergencies and disasters. More than three dozen Spanish-speaking volunteers have been trained in basic disaster response, fire extinguishing, use of emergency medicine, light search and rescue and disaster psychology.



Ensuring cyber security – County and state agencies came together with representatives from 17 private sector companies to address cyber security gaps at the government and business levels. The three-part workshop examined how security breaches may affect the state’s leading businesses and what the government and private sectors should do to identify and address such threats. North Carolina was one of five states chosen nationally to participate in the program led by the Center for Infrastructure Assurance and Security.

Protecting our food supply – Division staff partnered with employees from Public Health and Agriculture agencies to develop and conduct a bio-terrorism exercise that tested the state’s capability to ensure agriculture and food safety in order to protect the public’s health.

Engaging the military – Dozens of military, local and state emergency management staff from seven different military installations in North Carolina discussed coordinated plans and response to protect the state’s military families and bases during a major disaster.

Keeping our state ports secure – Nearly 200 people from a dozen local, state and federal agencies rehearsed their coordinated response to various maritime security scenarios. The week-long exercise tested communications and response capabilities to an explosion, cargo ship fire, mass-casualty incident and hostage situation.



Coordinating public safety in nuclear events – NCEM worked with utility companies, state agencies and counties affected by the McGuire Nuclear Station and Sharron Harris Nuclear Plant to test their coordinated response to a nuclear event.

While such biennial exercises have become a routine part of the job for many local and state agencies, the federally-required drills took on additional meaning in the wake of the dramatic shut-down of the nuclear plant in Fukushima, Japan.



Training Helo-Aquatic Rescue Teams – Dozens of first responders from local fire departments and rescue agencies joined North Carolina National Guard and State Highway Patrol helicopter pilots and emergency management staff in quarterly training exercises.

NC HART technicians and support staff members rotated venues so they could practice rescuing hikers trapped on mountainous rock ledges, victims stranded on top of submerged vehicles, and people stuck on an island.

Training Search and Rescue crews – A series of large scale, multi-day exercises throughout the year brought together hundreds of first responders, emergency

management staff and rescue technicians to train together to find people who are lost, hurt or stranded in wilderness or mountainous terrain.





Presidential Briefing

As coastal states prepared for hurricane season, four North Carolina delegates met June 1 with President Obama, Homeland Security Director Janet Napolitano and FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate to describe what they were doing at the state and local levels to ensure our communities and counties are prepared.

Gov. Bev Perdue, Secretary Reuben Young, Emergency Management Director Doug Hoell and New Hanover County Emergency Management Director Warren Lee described for the nation's leaders how it takes an entire community to prepare for, respond to and recover from a hurricane, tornado, flood or any other major disaster.

Responding to Disaster and Helping Communities Recover

North Carolina experienced more disasters in 2011 than it had in more than a decade. Coordinating local, state, federal and volunteer resources quickly and efficiently is vital to helping communities navigate through the long recovery process and begin to return to normal.

Immediately following a disaster, damage assessment teams from the county, state and sometimes federal governments inventory the destruction to determine what financial assistance may be available to help survivors. NCEM works closely with the Small Business Administration and/or the Federal Emergency Management Agency to help individuals, families, businesses and sometimes local governments secure much needed grants and loans to recover from the incident.



After more severe storms, state and federal emergency management workers may move

into the affected communities to provide closer coordination during the recovery process. Emergency management employees and reservists open disaster recovery centers and visit with survivors to provide one-on-one guidance regarding the often-complicated disaster assistance application process. These state and federal emergency management workers continue to work in the communities for weeks or months after the disaster to help survivors find permanent safe housing, apply for financial assistance, find child or health services and meet other disaster-related needs.

During 2011, NCEM helped residents and businesses recover from tornadoes that hit 30 counties and hurricanes and related flooding that affected 40 counties. In addition, NCEM staff responded to forest fires that burned 77,000 acres Down East, and a snow storm that affected numerous mountain counties.

Here is a snapshot of assistance that NCEM provided during 2011.

Statewide Tornado Outbreak - April 16

The largest tornado outbreak in state history claimed 24 lives, seriously injured more than 130 people and affected more than 30 counties. When it was confirmed that 30 tornadoes had touched down, local meteorologists noted that North Carolina had experienced a year's worth of tornadoes in one day.

Recovery efforts included:

- Inspected 6,318 damaged or destroyed homes and businesses
- Opened 23 shelters in 13 counties, housing a combined 375 occupants
- Received federal disaster declarations for individual assistance (20 counties) and public assistance (18 counties)
- Distributed \$8.4 million in federal and state grants to 2,038 households to help pay for temporary housing, replace personal property and pay for other disaster-related needs not covered by insurance.
- Approved \$13 million in low-interest disaster loans from the U.S. Small Business Administration to help 274 home owners and 33 business owners repair and rebuild.
- Provided \$27.5 million via FEMA's Public Assistance program to government agencies and non-profit organizations to repair public facilities and pay for storm response and clean up.
- Installed 36 FEMA temporary housing units to provide much-needed shelter as families repaired or rebuilt their homes.
- Operated 17 disaster recovery centers for six weeks; providing one-on-one guidance on the recovery process to 4,679 people.
- Fielded 9,800 requests for information or assistance via the FEMA hotline.
- Operated a state-federal Joint Field Office for eight weeks to coordinate recovery programs.



Mecklenburg flooding – August 5

Summer thunderstorms dumped six inches of rain in less than 24 hours to the Mecklenburg County area causing flash flooding in many low-lying areas. Two people died in the floodwaters that damaged dozens of homes and businesses. Recovery efforts included:

- Inspected 70+ damaged homes and businesses.
- Received state disaster declaration.
- Operated a disaster loan outreach center.
- Provided \$55,000 in state grants and \$368,000 in SBA loans.



Hurricane Irene – August 27

The worst hurricane in more than a decade claimed seven lives and caused significant damage to more than one third of the state. Several coastal and inner banks counties suffered the worst flooding in recent history as five to 15 feet of storm surge swept through. Recovery efforts included:



- Inspected more than 27,700 damaged homes and businesses.
- Opened 86 shelters in 41 counties to house more than 10,000 evacuees.
- Received federal disaster declarations for individual assistance (38 counties) and public assistance (37 counties).
- Distributed \$35 million+ in federal and state grants to more than 15,750 households to help pay for temporary housing, replace personal property and pay for other disaster-related needs not covered by insurance.
- Approved \$46 million in SBA loans to 1,073 homeowners and 195 business owners.
- Provided \$107 million in federal Public Assistance funds to repair infrastructure and pay for storm response and clean up.
- Installed 196 FEMA temporary housing units to provide much-needed shelter as 194 families rebuilt their homes.
- Operated 31 disaster recovery centers for 10 weeks; visited with 17,666 people to provide one-on-one guidance regarding the recovery process.
- Fielded 35,000 requests for information or assistance via the FEMA hotline.
- Provided \$3.8 million in Disaster Unemployment Assistance to 827 claimants.
- Operated a Joint Field Office for 14 weeks to coordinate recovery programs.



Simmons Road Fire – June 20 to late July

Forest fires threatened small communities and rural homes in Bladen and Cumberland counties for more than a month as fire fighters fought the persistent blaze. NCEM provided staff and equipment support, while Federal Fire Management Assistance Grants helped fund the fire suppression efforts.

Tornadoes in Davidson and Randolph counties - November 16

Severe storms and tornadoes rolled across the Piedmont, killing two people, causing more than a dozen injuries and destroying and damaging dozens of homes. It marked the third time in less than two years the county had been struck by deadly tornadoes. Recovery efforts included:

- Inspected nearly 100 damaged homes and businesses.
- Operated a disaster loan outreach center.
- Provided \$2 million in federal and state grants and \$122,900 in Small Business Administration loans to help families recover.

The Disaster Declaration Process

Varying levels of local, state and federal financial assistance may be available to individuals, business owners, non-profit agencies, local or county governments following a disaster. The flow of physical and financial government aid begins with the declaration of a State of Emergency or State of Disaster. A presidential emergency or disaster declaration triggers financial and physical aid through FEMA.

*The governor or a municipal or county official may declare a **State of Emergency** when conditions exist, or are imminent, in which public safety authorities are unable to adequately protect lives or property. Such declarations are necessary to authorize financial or physical assistance from other governments. It also enables local officials to enact curfews and restrict the sale of alcohol, dangerous weapons, gasoline and other key substances.*

*The governor can make a **State Disaster Declaration** upon an occurrence, or imminent threat of widespread damage, injury, loss of life or property from any natural or man-made disaster. Such a declaration is necessary to authorize state financial assistance.*

*After the governor requests assistance, the president can make a **Federal Disaster Declaration**, enabling the Federal Emergency Management Agency to provide low-interest loans or grants to disaster survivors to help them repair their homes, rebuild their businesses and pay for medical and other disaster-related costs.*

Planning for the Future

Emergency managers must constantly look ahead to identify threats, update plans and develop new capabilities to mitigate those threats and improve disaster response. Working with local governments and private industries, NCEM improves the state's disaster readiness posture through deliberate and coordinated planning. In 2011, NCEM:

- Completed **all-hazard risk assessments** for each of the state's counties and regions using information from local emergency management agencies and the nine Domestic Preparedness Regions. The information will help determine the scope and effect of potential hazards on critical infrastructures. It also will measure current capability levels and identify vulnerabilities that need to be addressed.
- Completed **hazardous materials studies** for two additional regions. Five of the state's nine domestic preparedness regions have updated information that will be used by the departments of Transportation and Public Health to help ensure that hazardous materials are transported in the safest manner possible along corridors with minimal risk. The studies also will help identify additional training and planning needed to respond to hazardous materials incidents along these critical corridors.
- Completed a **homeland security state preparedness report** and the strategic plan for 2011-2013.
- Began a **hurricane evacuation study** to help prepare both coastal and inland counties for the effects of evacuated residents and tourists.
- Helped local communities **recognize and assess the level of natural hazard risks** in order to identify possible precautionary actions to make those areas safer and more resilient in future disasters. NCEM staff partnered with local planners to review, update and approve 59 regional hazard mitigation plans.
- Continued gathering information for the **Integrated Risk Management system** which provides the level of risk and probability for every structure in the state. Homeowners, business owners and city planners can review their property's risk online to determine which structures may be affected by floods, tornados, hurricanes or other such natural disasters, and what steps they can take to mitigate those risks.
- **Closed out 115 hazard mitigation projects** to keep damage from future natural disasters to a minimum.



New State Emergency Operations Center

North Carolina Emergency Management moved to the new Emergency Operations Center in December. The agency is co-located with the N.C. National Guard, NCDOT traffic congestion management center and Highway Patrol communications center.

The 237,000-square-foot building, which is the N.C. National Guard Joint Force Headquarters, was funded with \$41.5 million in stimulus funds and \$14.5 million that had previously been set aside for a new facility. It includes a large situation briefing room, breakout rooms for each emergency function, a Joint Information Center, media briefing facility and Governor's Hotline.



Construction of the new building began in May 2009 and was completed in fall 2011.

Operations and Disaster Funding in 2011

North Carolina Emergency Management had an \$11.1 million budget in 2011. The money, which came from a combination of federal and state funds and receipts, was primarily used to:

- plan for the use of state and local resources to respond to disasters
- evaluate and plan for hazards and associated risks to people and infrastructure
- respond to real emergencies and disasters anywhere in the state
- manage long-term recovery from past disasters, and
- maintain 24/7 capability to assist local governments.

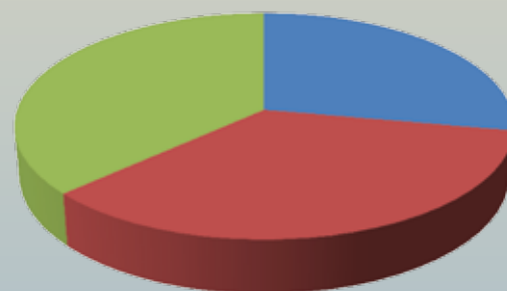
Funds paid for equipment for municipal, county and state agencies; for training and exercises for first responders, emergency management staff and law enforcement; and to operate the floodplain mapping and regional response hazardous materials programs.

Approximately 28 percent – \$3.1 million – of the division's budget was funded by state appropriations. Those monies were used to leverage federal funds.

Thirty-five percent of the budget – \$3.9 million – came from receipts received through the radiological protection and flood plain mapping programs.

The remaining 37 percent – or \$4.1 million – came from Emergency Management Planning Grants via the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the Federal Emergency Management Agency. In addition, the state administers

federal grants to state and local entities or agencies that apply and compete for the federal funds. The funding amount granted through each program can vary widely from year to year depending on the number of other states that apply for and receive funding.

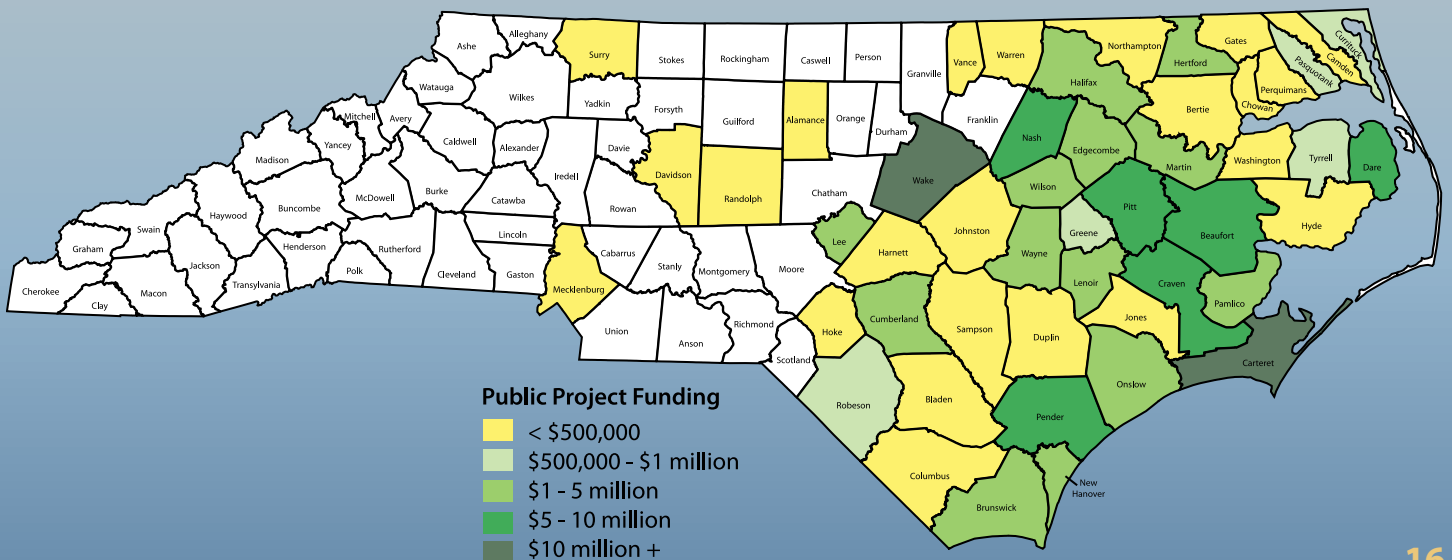
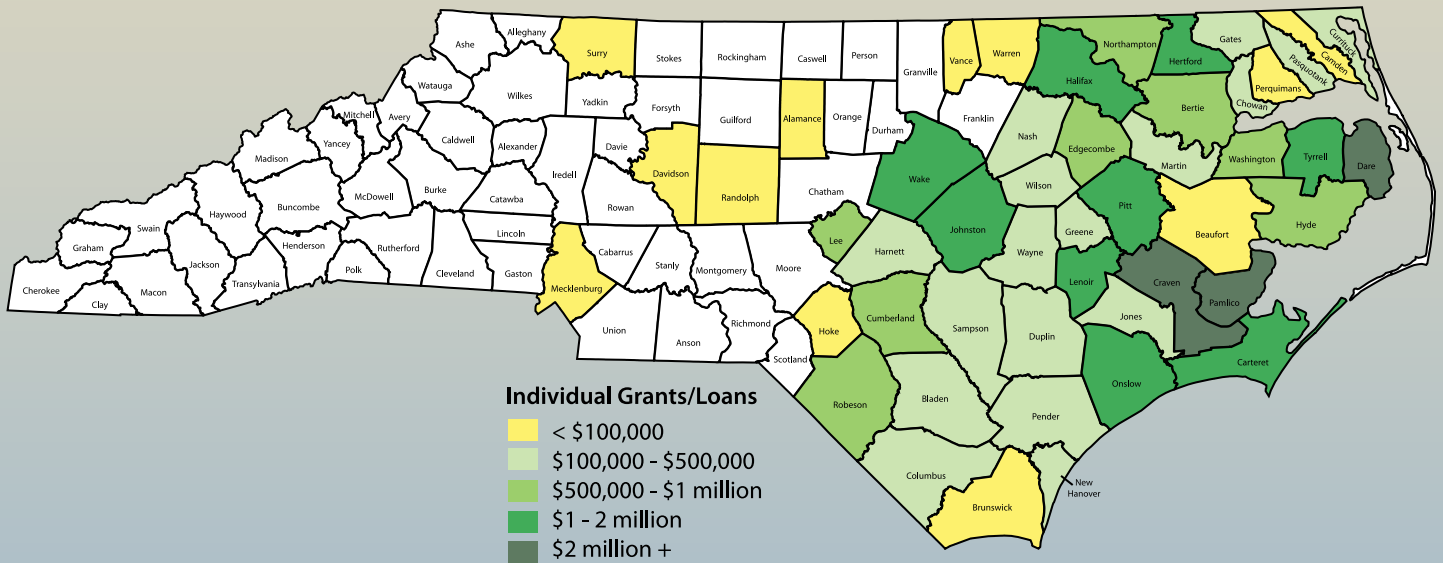
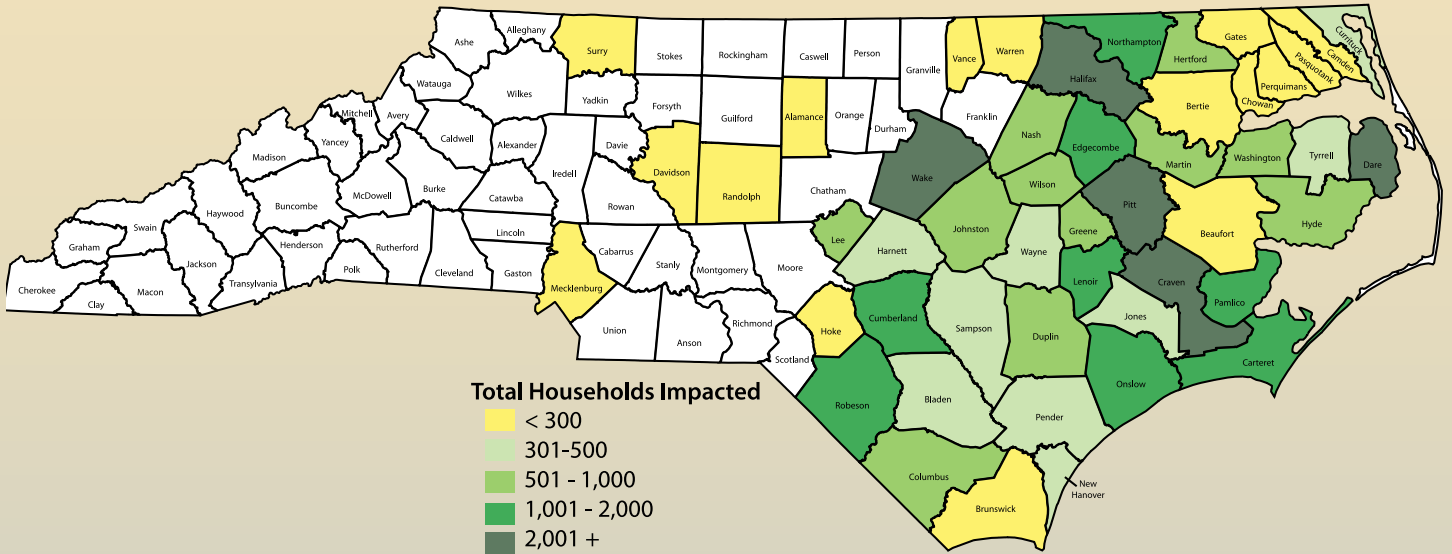


- State Appropriations \$3.1 M
- Receipts \$3.9 M
- EMPG Funds \$4.1 M

Disaster Assistance

Nearly half of the state's 100 counties were affected by disasters in 2011, and approximately a dozen counties were struck by more than one state- or federally-declared storm. In several counties, more than 2,500 individuals, families or business owners who had little, if any, insurance lost most, if not all, of their homes and belongings. Federal grants and loans through FEMA and the U.S. Small Business Administration helped those families repair or rebuild their homes and businesses. Federal funds helped local governments and certain non-profits repair public facilities, pay for storm response and clean up debris after the storm.

Disaster Assistance for Individuals and Local Governments



www.ncem.org
919-825-2500



Governor Beverly Perdue
Secretary Reuben Young, Department of Public Safety

