

An aerial photograph of a river valley, likely the Winston-Salem area, showing a winding road and agricultural fields. The image is dark and serves as a background for the text.

Hurricane Helene  
– Winston-  
Salem/Forsyth  
County Response

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# Hurricane Response

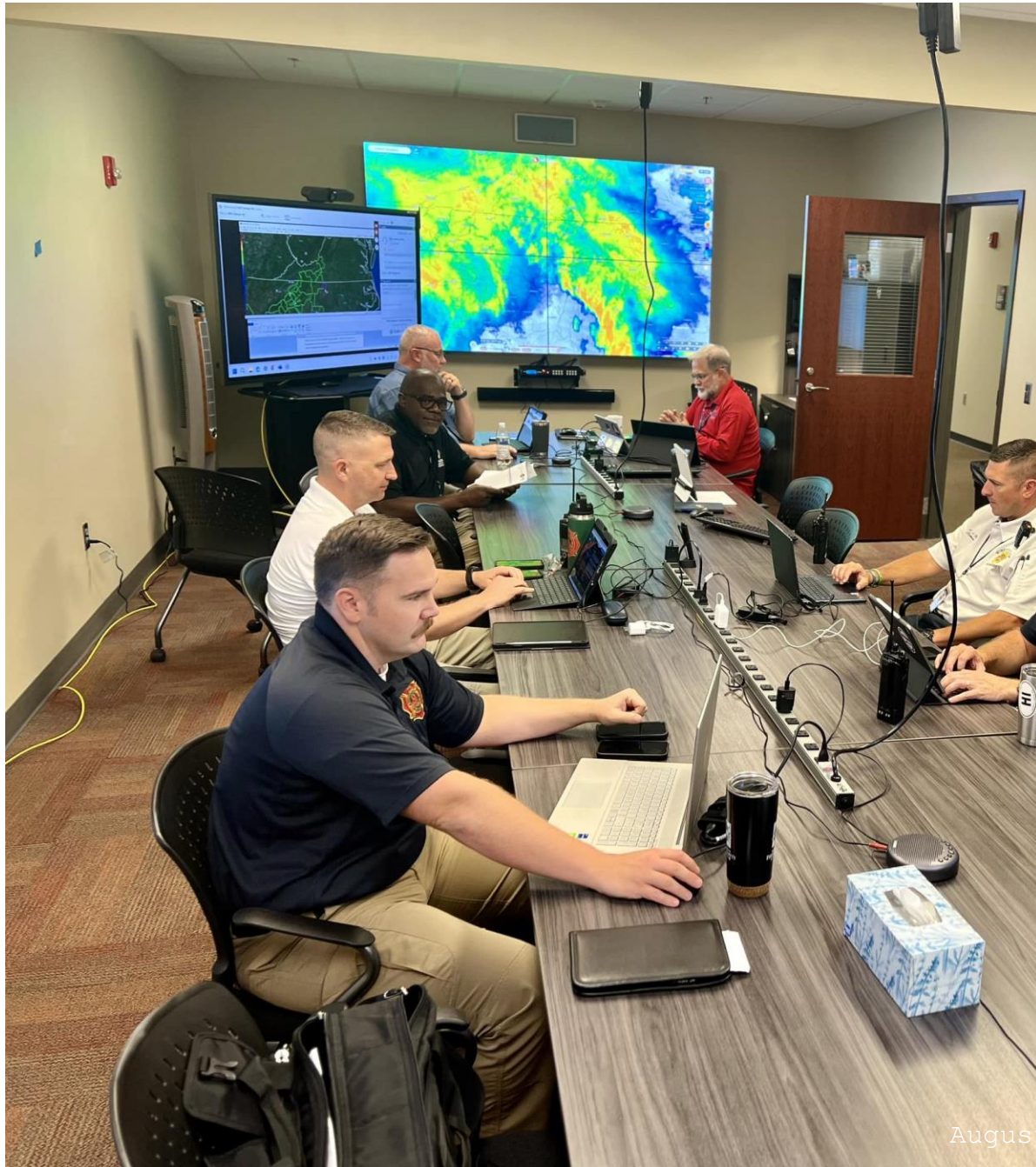
- Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Local Response
- Statewide Mutual Aid Agreement
- Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Western, NC Response
- Misinformation and Disinformation
- How to assist and how not to assist

# Hurricane Response

## Local Response

- Start planning and coordination meetings and briefings with all public safety and other partners 72 hours before landfall
- Putting public preparedness messaging out and conducting media interviews
- Begin daily National Weather Service (NWS) and North Carolina Emergency Management (NCEM) briefings
- Day of impact activated the SITUATION ROOM and put the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) on standby if needed





# Statewide Mutual Aid Agreement

- The Mutual Aid System is a voluntary agreement among North Carolina local governments to share resources during a disaster
- All 100 counties, the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, and nearly three-fourths of the 650 municipalities have signed the mutual aid agreement
- The obvious benefit of joining the Mutual Aid System is having access to all of the State's response capabilities without incurring the costs to purchase, maintain, and insure an inventory of underused resources
- Participating in the system provides efficient and effective assistance among governments, as well as faster reimbursement from the Federal Emergency

# Hurricane Response

## City Response (So Far)

**WSFD** - 28 personnel in several teams, conducting multiple missions including water rescues, firefighting, public information, incident management team operations, etc.

**WSPD** - 38 personnel in several teams, conducting force protection/security for SAR teams, critical infrastructure security, police patrol functions, drone operations, missing persons, donated goods, etc.

# Hurricane Response

## City Response (So Far)

**City-County Utilities** - 9 personnel to repair water mains, water lines, and sewer lines

**City-County OEM** - 3 staff, 1 conducting water infrastructure rebuild management team and 2 conducting mass care/human services sheltering operations and incident management team. 2 remaining staff locally coordinating deployments, donations, messaging, logistics, etc.

**City-County Planning Board** - 1 building inspector deploying this week

This list may not be complete. Does not include hospitals/healthcare, non-governmental organizations,

# Hurricane Response

## County Response (So Far)

**FCEMS** - 2 teams of 6 personnel running 911 medical calls, facility evacuations, mass care sheltering medical operations, etc.

## **Health and Human Services -**

- 14 DSS and 1 HHS employees worked/are working in a shelter
- 8 public health nurses worked in a medically fragile shelter
- 2 Environmental Health employees conducting inspections
- 1 HHS Preparedness Coordinator is assisting in vetting resource requests



# Hurricane Response

## County Response (So Far)

FCSO -

This list may not be complete. Other departments and agencies rostered and on standby to deploy

# Briefings



# Public Information

- Utilize trusted and established sources of information
- Conduct your own personal “fact-finding”
- Misinformation, disinformation, hoaxes, and conspiracy theories are widespread and impacting the response
- Hurricane Rumor Response -  
<https://www.fema.gov/disaster/current/hurricanehelene/rumor-response>  
<https://www.ncdps.gov/our-organization/emergency-management/hurricane-helene/hurricane-helene-fact-vs-rumor>

# Assistance – Observations

- Do not self-deploy, “go rogue” or freelance
- For governmental organizations/agencies you are required to have an official **mission or tracking number**
- Do not randomly load up supplies and head up without a point of contact, resource list, and a meeting location
- This can be a huge drain on time, resources, and personnel
- Some areas have no fuel, no power, no water, no internet, no sewer, no hotels, no lodging, no gas, etc.

# Assistance – Observations

- For civilians' partner-to-partner is optimal – for example, a church-to-church or non-profit to non-profit
- Avoid “cleaning out the closet” donations – a big issue
- Be prepared to be self-sufficient for 5 to 7 days
- **BEWARE scammers and scams**
- **New groups were staying up daily, some legitimate and some not**
- **Look for established, legitimate, recognized**



# Assistance – Observations

## Positive Note

- Response, Recovery, and Clean-Up can go on for days, weeks, and months
- A massive amount of personnel, funds, and resources are flowing into Western, NC
- 1,000 responders, 1,000 military personnel, 800 Red Cross Workers, etc. have deployed
- Personally saw many acts of kindness and assistance
- There is a cooperative spirit occurring