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MILITARY BUSINESS

Hurricane Helene support

NCMBC PARTNERS WITH NCDOT TO FIND QUALIFIED VENDORS TO HELP WITH REBUILDING WESTERN NC AFTER HURRICANE HELENE

As cleanup continues in western North Carolina following the devastating destruction left by Hurricane Helene, contractors and vendors from outside of the affected areas are organizing ways that they can contribute.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has spent the last few weeks doing preliminary assessments to find the best locations to begin coordinating aid efforts with the NC Department of Transportation (NCDOT) and the State Emergency Management Office.

Now, they have begun dispatching field engineers in the affected areas who will provide technical assessments to the counties. Once needs are assessed counties will procure cost estimates and define contracts that will be available to be competed for by vendors.

Experts estimate that Hurricane Helene's economic impact on North Carolina will be upwards of \$200 billion and the recovery and rebuild efforts will take years.

Millions of North Carolinians lost access to critical services like water and sewer, electricity, telecommunications and healthcare facilities – services that for some communities remain unavailable.

To do their part, the North Carolina Military Business Center (NCMBC) is monitoring federal, state and local government contracting opportunities to support Western Carolina and inform the businesses that can assist with the recovery and rebuilding effort.

“The North Carolina Military Business Center is in the process of collecting credible information to support Western Carolina with supplies and recovery efforts,” shared NCMBC Director of Operations Courtney Smedick. “Traditionally, the NCMBC does not monitor state or local government contracting opportunities; however, the federal contractors that we work with daily are well-established and familiar with federal disaster recovery efforts – and fully capable to assist with the state and local government opportunities.”



PHOTOS PROVIDED BY NCMBC

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According to a Preliminary Damage and Needs Assessment from the office of Gov. Roy Cooper released on Oct. 23, to date, Helene is the third-deadliest US storm in the 21st century, with nearly 100 confirmed deaths in North Carolina alone and dozens more still missing.

Thirty-nine counties have been designated by FEMA for federal disaster assistance. An estimated 4.6 million people – more than 40%

of the state's population – live in one of the designated counties. The region's economy, which accounts for 45% of the state's GDP, has suffered a severe blow, threatening livelihoods and the long-term viability of communities.

Preliminary estimates of damage and needs approach \$53.6 billion across the state, including \$41.1 billion of direct damages, \$7.6 billion of indirect or induced damages and \$4.8 billion of potential investments for strengthening and mitigation.

Five categories drive more than 90% of estimated direct and indirect damage: Economy, Housing, Utilities and Natural Resources, Transportation and Agriculture. The damage attributable to Helene is roughly three times the \$16.7 billion impact of Hurricane Florence in 2018.

According to the NCMBC, Hurricane Helene created over 10 million cubic-yards of debris, and damaged roads across more than 30 counties.

The work to rebuild will range from emergency response (debris removal; food provisions; medical support; temporary shelters), to roofing and residential/commercial construction (renovating and rebuilding); providing transportation and logistics services to the affected areas and much more. The NCDOT

has also identified over 100 bridges that will need to be rebuilt.

The NCMBC is working to help area contractors prepare to bid for the incoming contracts by ensuring they are properly registered with the required sites and connected to resources that will advertise the opportunities as they come. The NCMBC and the Small Business and Technology Development Center (SBTDC) created an Introductory Guide to Government Contracting for Hurricane Recovery as a resource for businesses to help them get started.

“Hurricane Helene's recovery will be a concerted effort between federal, state and local governments. Contractors and service providers have a unique opportunity to contribute to the rebuilding process through state and federal contracts,” said Smedick. “Federal and state contracting operate differently, so it is important for businesses to make sure they are registered and qualified to provide support appropriately.”

The NCMBC is encouraging monetary donations to be sent to the North Carolina Community College Foundation and any donations of supplies can be made locally to Fayetteville Technical Community College, home to NCMBC's headquarters.

“As part of the NC Community College System, the NCMBC encourages donations to the North Carolina Community College Foundation. Funds collected will support the 14 community colleges and their foundations serving 26 designated areas of Helene,” said Smedick. “Locally, Fayetteville Technical Community College is collecting donations and will utilize one of their tractor-trailers utilized for training drivers to deliver much-needed supplies to the region.”



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– Courtney Smedick
NCMBC Director of Operations



Access the NCMBC resources online at www.ncmbc.us/hurricane-helene-support.