



# News Release

For Immediate Release: October 29, 2018

## **Durham Now Included in Hurricane Florence Disaster Assistance** *Delayed Response Times for Flooding & Draining Inquiries Due to High Volume*

DURHAM, N.C. – On the morning of September 17, the remnants of Hurricane Florence brought intense and heavy rainfall to the Bull City, with areas in western and northern Durham experiencing particularly severe rainfall in excess of a [100-year flood event](#).

More than one month later, the City continues to address the large number of flooding and storm drainage inquiries generated by the remnants of Hurricanes Florence and Michael, which has resulted in nearly 400 flooding and drainage inquiries as well as reports of 35-to-40 residential and commercial structures that experienced significant flooding during these severe weather events, which included damage to structures outside of designated [special flood hazard areas](#).

On October 22, the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) included Durham County as eligible for SBA economic injury loans for small businesses, most private nonprofit organizations, and homeowners. Businesses and private nonprofit organizations of any size may borrow up to \$2 million to repair or replace disaster damaged or destroyed real estate, machinery and equipment, inventory, and other business assets. Disaster loans up to \$200,000 are available to homeowners to repair or replace disaster damaged or destroyed real estate. Homeowners and renters are eligible up to \$40,000 to repair or replace disaster damaged or destroyed personal property.

While Durham property owners can now begin to seek assistance from the SBA, City staff continues to work through the backlog of flooding and drainage inquiries. According to Graham Summerson, civil engineer with the Public Works Department Stormwater & GIS Services Division, 391 flooding and drainage inquiries have been received since September 17, and residents should expect some delay in response times due to this large volume of service requests. “We are working to reduce the delays in response times for flooding and storm drainage inquiries by temporarily reassigning exiting staff and augmenting staff with temporary assistance,” Summerson said. “Training this new and temporary staff to respond takes time, but we hope to have more resources dedicated to the effort in the coming days and weeks, and appreciate everyone’s patience.”

According to Summerson, City and County staff are still working to record and gather information on the total number of affected structures. Residents who need to report flooding, or to schedule a drainage investigation, are encouraged to email their information to [SSDDrainage@DurhamNC.gov](mailto:SSDDrainage@DurhamNC.gov), and should include a contact name, phone number, email address, address of the drainage concern, and a brief description of the issue.

Applicants may apply for SBA Disaster Assistance online using the Electronic Loan Application (ELA) via the SBA’s secure website at <https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela/>. The filing deadline to return applications for physical property damage is Nov. 13, 2018. The deadline to return economic injury applications is June 14, 2019.

To be considered for all forms of disaster assistance, applicants should register online at

<https://www.disasterassistance.gov/> or download the FEMA mobile app. If online or mobile access is unavailable, applicants should call the FEMA toll-free helpline at (800) 621-3362. Those who use 711-Relay or Video Relay Services should call (800) 621-3362.

### **About the Public Works Department Stormwater and GIS Services Division**

The [Stormwater and GIS Services Division](#) with the City of Durham Public Works Department is guided by the City's [Strategic Plan](#) goals of stewardship of the City's physical and environmental assets and innovative and high-performing organization. Activities include storm drainage design and plans review; inspecting and maintaining City-owned drainage systems; enforcing stormwater ordinances and regulations; education and outreach; stream monitoring, restoration, and watershed master planning; maintaining multiple layers of the City's geographic information; and stormwater billing. To learn more, follow on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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