

Hurricane Irma—Georgia: Sept. 11, 2017

Weakened Storm Could Still Pack a Punch

The worst of Hurricane Irma appears to have passed as the storm, downgraded to a Category 1 hurricane, moves northward toward Georgia. But officials warned that the threat is not over.

Authorities in Georgia are warning residents to seek secure shelter and are mobilizing resources as Irma threatens to bring winds of nearly 75 miles per hour and up to 15 inches of rain to parts of the state.

Where is Irma now?

Irma was around 60 miles north of Tampa, according to the National Hurricane Center's (NHC) [forecast](#) at 5 a.m. Eastern. The storm is moving north at around 18 mph and is forecast to move into southern Georgia this afternoon.

How strong is Irma?

Irma weakened [from a Category 3 to a Category 1 hurricane](#) early Monday, but authorities warned that the danger has not passed. Category 1 storms are still capable of damaging the roofs of well-built homes, snapping large branches from trees and damaging power lines.

Storm surge warnings are still in effect along Florida's western coast, meaning there is a threat to life from rising waters flooding coastal areas. Strong winds are also forecast in northern Florida and southern Georgia, accompanied by heavy rainfall and the possibility of tornadoes in both states. Tropical storm warnings are [in place](#) across much of Georgia, including the capital Atlanta.

What is happening in Georgia?

Georgia Governor Nathan Deal [expanded](#) an existing state of emergency on Sunday to include all 159 counties in the state. All state offices except essential services will be closed Monday and Tuesday, and Deal urged Georgia schools to close for the coming days. The state has also opened parks to function as evacuation shelters, and 3,000 National Guard troops have been mobilized to help those affected by the storm.

The storm had already cut power to more than 150,000 customers in southern and middle Georgia by Monday morning, and outages were likely to continue across the state, the [Atlanta Journal-Constitution](#) reported.

Deal urged residents to secure their homes and shelter in place through Tuesday, and to avoid traveling by road. The governor added that President Donald Trump had called him Sunday to offer federal resources should Georgia need them, [Fox 5 reported](#).

Source: <http://www.newsweek.com/hurricane-irma-tracker-georgia-florida-662775>

School Closures

Several schools in Atlanta and in coastal Georgia are closed for multiple days ahead of Irma's arrival. In coastal Georgia, Bryan County, Savannah-Chatham County, McIntosh County, Monroe County and Glynn County Schools closed Friday, and will remain closed Monday and Tuesday. In metro Atlanta, Butts County, Griffin-Spalding County, Lamar County and Pike County Schools will be closed Monday and Tuesday. Numerous school districts around the state have announced closures for Monday and Tuesday. Closures include the University of Georgia, Emory University and Georgia Southern.

Georgia cancels classes

The [University of Georgia](#) will be closed Monday, Sept. 11, with all classes, campus events and activities canceled. University residence halls will remain open. A decision on Tuesday operations will be made by noon on Monday.

Contact us anytime for confidential assistance.

Georgia Tech monitoring storm

Georgia Tech officials said they are monitoring Irma's progress and that the Atlanta campus remained open for now. Georgia Tech's Savannah campus is closed through Tuesday, Sept. 12. Classes in Savannah have been canceled for the week of Sept. 11-15.

Source: <https://weather.com/storms/hurricane/news/2017-09-11-hurricane-irma-georgia-preparations-impacts>

Public Transportation

The Metro Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA) announced Sunday that it would be [suspending all bus, rail and mobility service](#) Monday due to the storm.

The state's Xpress bus and the CobbLinc express bus will [also suspend operations Monday](#), WSB Radio reports. Gwinnett County Transit has also announced its bus service will not be running.

Source: <https://weather.com/storms/hurricane/news/2017-09-11-hurricane-irma-georgia-preparations-impacts>

To Get Help

Georgia

- United Way 2-1-1: Dial 211 or visit: <http://unitedwaycg.org/2-1-1>
- American Red Cross: 912.651.5300: <http://www.redcross.org/local/georgia>
- Office of Emergency Management Agency: <http://www.gema.ga.gov/Pages/default.aspx>

Shelters

Source: http://www.gema.ga.gov/Web%20Content/GEMA_HS%20Shelter%20Information.pdf

The following is a list of known shelters currently accepting evacuees. As additional shelter information becomes available, we will update this list. We encourage those affected by Hurricane Irma to contact your local officials, listen to your local media, and heed the warnings of your emergency management directors.

In the following list, American Red Cross Shelters, which are available to host individuals with functional and access needs, are indicated by the letters ARC before the shelter title. Good Samaritan shelters, which are managed independently from American Red Cross shelters, are indicated by the letters GS before the shelter title. Shelters being offered within Georgia State Parks, which are managed by the Department of Natural Resources, are indicated by the letters DNR before the shelter title.

Shelter	Address	County
ARC - Abraham Baldwin College	2802 Moore Highway, Tifton	Tift County
ARC - Academy of Richmond County	910 Russell St., Augusta	Richmond County
ARC - Albany Civic Center	100 W Oglethorpe Rd., Albany 31701	Dougherty County
ARC - Blackshear Trail Elementary School	1001 Blackshear Rd., Cordele	Crisp County
ARC - Butler High School	2011 Lumpkin Rd., Augusta	Richmond County
ARC - Central Square Complex Gymnasium	200 N Madison Ave., Douglas	Coffee County

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ARC - Columbus Civic Center Ice Arena	400 4th St., Columbus	Muscogee County
ARC - Dublin High School	1951 Hillcrest Parkway, Dublin	Laurens County
ARC - East Laurens High School	920 Highway 80 East, East Dublin	Laurens County
ARC - East Laurens Middle School	930 Highway 80 East, East Dublin	Laurens County
ARC - East Macon Park	3326 Ocmulgee East Blvd., Macon	Bibb County
ARC - First Baptist Church of Cuthbert	567 College St., Cuthbert	Randolph County
ARC - First Baptist Church of Gainesville	751 Green St., Gainesville	Hall County
ARC - Frank Chester Recreation Center	1441 Benning Dr., Columbus	Muscogee County
DNR - ELIJAH CLARK	2959 McCormick Hwy, Lincolnton	Lincoln County
DNR - Red Top Mountain Group Shelter	50 Lodge Rd., Cartersville	Bartow County
DNR Reed Bingham State Park	542 Reed Bingham Rd., Adel,	Cook County
DNR - Richard B. Russell Group Shelter	2650 Russell State Park Dr., Elberton	Elbert County
DNR - Sweetwater Creek Group Shelter	1750 Mt. Vernon Rd., Lithia Springs	Douglas County
DNR - Tugaloo Group Shelter	1763 Tugaloo State Park Rd., Lavonia	Franklin County
DNR - Vogel State Park Group Shelter	405 Vogel State Park Rd., Blairsville	Union County
DNR AH Stephens Group Shelter	456 Alexander Street NW, Crawfordville	Taliaferro County
DNR- High Falls Group Shelter	76 High Falls Park Dr., Jackson	Butts County
DNR Indian Springs Group Shelter	678 Lake Clark Road, Flovilla	Butts County
DNR Panola Mountain Group Shelter	2600 Hwy 155 SW, Stockbridge	Henry County
DNR-Cloudland Canyon Group Shelter	122 Cloudland Canyon Park Rd., Rising Fawn	Dade County
First United Methodist Church	107 W.12th St., Tifton	Tift County
GS - Bainbridge High School	1301 E. College St., Bainbridge	Decatur County
GS - Church of Christ	372 S. 2nd St., Cochran	Bleckley County
GS - Consolation Baptist	6316 Golden Isles W., Baxley	Appling County
GS - Dublin First Baptist	405 Bellevue Ave., Dublin	Laurens County
GS - First Baptist Church	101 S. 2nd St., Cochran	Bleckley County
GS - First Independent United Methodist Church	107 Imperial Church Rd., Eatonton	Putnam County
GS - Freedom Church 02	500 Underwood Rd., Milledgeville	Baldwin County
GS - Manor Community Center	Manor-Milwood Road	Ware County
GS - Northside Baptist Church	4605 Murray Ave., Tifton	Tift County
GS - Park Avenue United Methodist Church	100 E Park Ave., Valdosta	Lowndes County

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GS - Remnant Church of God	83205 Memorial Drive, Waycross	Ware County
GS - Rentz Baptist Church	1011 Bates Ave., Rentz	Laurens County
GS - Ridge Rowe Baptist Church	56 Southland Path, Hiram	Paulding County
GS - Scott Baptist Church	5 Archer Pond Smith Road, Adrian	Emanuel County
GS - Zion Hill Free Will Baptist Church	3064 Zion Hill Road, Milwood	Ware County
GS New Providence Baptist	2560 Highway 41, South Forsyth	Monroe County
GS Wills Park Community Center	175 Roswell St., Allpharetta	Fulton County
Mathis City Auditorium 02	2300 N Ashley St., Valdosta	Lowndes County

Road Conditions

Call 511: The Department of Transportation offers its free 511 service for travel information and roadway conditions, including road and bridge closures, toll suspensions and major evacuation routes.

Georgia

- <http://www.511ga.org/> - a con ctl&zoom=3&lat=3990785.92806&lon=-9392690.23602

Power Outages

To report an outage, call:

Georgia

- Georgia Power: 888.891.0938

Damage Update

- As of 8 a.m. Monday, \ more than 180,000 customers were without power in Georgia and Georgia Power was working to repair more than 1,500 individual cases of damage (including broken poles and lines).
- Damage and outages are primarily concentrated in Central, South and Coastal Georgia.

Tools You Can Use

- Outage Alerts – Subscribe to the free Georgia Power Outage Alert service to receive personalized notifications and updates via text message.
- Outage & Storm Center – Available at www.georgiapower.com/storm, customers can visit this site to sign up for Outage Alerts, report and check the status of outages, and access useful safety tips and information. Customers can report and check the status of an outage 24 hours a day by contacting Georgia Power at 888.891.0938.
- Outage Map – Housed within the Outage & Storm Center, Georgia Power’s interactive Outage Map provides near real-time information, allowing users to see where outages are occurring across the state and track estimated restoration times.
- Georgia Power Mobile App – Download the Georgia Power mobile app for [Apple](#) and [Android](#) devices to access storm and outage information on the go.
- @GeorgiaPower on Twitter – Follow @GeorgiaPower on [Twitter](#) for storm tips, outage updates, customer service and more.

Source: <http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/hurricane-irma-enters-georgia-180000-customers-already-without-power-300516993.html>

Open Campgrounds

- West Point Lake will open Holiday campground to accommodate evacuees from Hurricane Irma. Registration for a campsite will be handled at Holiday campground gatehouse. Although not required, evacuees are encouraged to call Holiday campground in advance at 706.884.6818. Please provide some

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form of identification that verifies they reside in one of the impacted areas from this hurricane before obtaining a campsite. Address: 954 Abbottsford Road, LaGrange. The park is located off GA Highway 109, approximately 10 miles west of Lagrange.

- Atlanta Motor Speedway will open its camping facilities free of charge on their unreserved campground facilities to evacuees seeking temporary refuge from the approaching Hurricane Irma. The speedway will open its facilities Thursday. Evacuees will have free access to hot showers and restroom facilities at the Rinnai Shower Station camper bath house. For more information, contact the speedway at 770.946.4211 or go to www.atlantamotorspeedway.com
- Information regarding evacuees utilizing campgrounds and RV sites at Georgia State Parks can be found on the Georgia State Parks website.

Source: http://www.gema.ga.gov/Web%20Content/GEMA_HS%20Shelter%20Information.pdf

Equine Evacuation Site

Owners will be required to provide the necessary feed, hay and tack to care for all horses while here. With the limited number of stalls available, equine owners will need to have a secondary site in case they've met capacity before arriving in Perry.

- Georgia National Fairgrounds & Agricenter: OPEN
- 401 Golden Isles Pkwy, Perry
- A.H. Stephens State Park: OPEN
- 456 Alexander St. NW, Crawfordville
- Hard Labor Creek State Park: OPEN
- 5 Hard Labor Creek Road, Rutledge
- Watson Mill Bridge State Park: OPEN
- 650 Watson Mill Road, Comer

Source: http://www.gema.ga.gov/Web%20Content/GEMA_HS%20Shelter%20Information.pdf?platform=hootsuite

Animal Shelters:

Below is a list of animal shelters that we know of.

- FVSU Safe Center: OPEN
55-399 Porter Lane, Fort Valley
- Macon Market Pet Shelter: OPEN
2055 Eisenhower Parkway, Macon
- PAWS Humane, INC.: OPEN
4900 Milgen Rd., Columbus
- Okefenokee Fairgrounds: OPEN
2451 Knight Avenue, Waycross
- The Pet Lodge: OPEN
5970 Peach Parkway, Fort Valley
- Albany Humane Society: OPEN
1705 West Oakridge Dr., Albany
- Tifton Animal Services: OPEN
278 Georgia HWY 125 S, Tifton
- Warner Robins Shelter: OPEN
208 Stalnaker Ave., Warner Robins

Source:

http://www.gema.ga.gov/Web%20Content/GEMA_HS%20Shelter%20Information.pdf?platform=hootsuite

Airport Closures

Atlanta airport

Delta Air Lines is [warning travelers to expect disruptions in Atlanta operations on Monday](#).

"With strong winds and extended rain expected in Atlanta Monday, Delta is recommending customers who are transiting its Atlanta hub on Monday to modify their itineraries around Atlanta on [delta.com](#)," Delta said in a written statement.

Delta is also waiving certain change fees for travelers who booked through Sept. 17 to fly to or through Atlanta.

Flight delay information: <http://www.flightstats.com/go/Home/home.do>

Source: http://www.al.com/news/index.ssf/2017/09/hurricane_irma_georgia_changes.html

FEMA

FEMA Emergency App

[Download the App](#)

You can also download the app via text messaging:

- If you have an Apple device: Text APPLE to 43362 (4FEMA)
- If you have an Android device: Text ANDROID to 43362 (4FEMA)
- If you use text messaging, standard message and data rates apply. Learn more about [our text messages](#).

Features in the App

- Alerts from the National Weather Service: Receive severe weather alerts for up to five locations across the U.S. and see information about how to stay safe.
- [Disaster Reporter](#): Upload and share photos of damage and recovery efforts.
- Maps of disaster resources: Locate and receive driving directions to open shelters and disaster recovery centers.
- Apply for assistance: Easily access DisasterAssistance.gov to apply for federal disaster assistance.
- Custom emergency safety information: Save a custom list of the items in your family's emergency kit, as well as the places you will meet in case of an emergency.
- Safety tips: Receive safety and preparedness reminders and learn how to stay safe before, during, and after over 20 types of hazards, including floods, hurricanes, tornadoes and earthquakes.
- Information in Spanish: Easily toggle between English and Spanish for all features of the app.

FEMA Fraud Alert

After a disaster, scam artists, identity thieves and other criminals may attempt to prey on vulnerable survivors. The most common post-disaster fraud practices include phony housing inspectors, fraudulent building contractors, bogus pleas for disaster donations and fake offers of state or federal aid.

Survivors should keep in mind:

- FEMA does not authorize individual contractors to solicit on its behalf. Beware of any individual contractors contacting you directly on behalf of FEMA to sign you up for debris removal or remediation services.
- If you have any concerns about individuals representing themselves as FEMA or would like to report fraud, please contact the National Center for Disaster Fraud at 866.720.5721 or via email at disaster@leo.gov.
- Federal and state workers never ask for, or accept money, and always carry identification badges
- There is no fee required to apply for or to get disaster assistance from FEMA, the U.S. Small Business Administration or the state.
- Scam attempts can be made over the phone, by mail or email, text or in person.

Price Gouging

Price gouging occurs when a supplier marks up the price of an item more than is justified by his actual costs. Survivors

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are particularly susceptible because their needs are immediate, and have few alternatives to choose from. If you find price gouging, contact you the [Florida State Office of the Attorney General](#).

Report Price Gouging

- Call: 1.866.966.7226
- [Price Gouging Complaint form](#)

Dealing With Contractors:

Survivors should take steps to protect themselves and avoid fraud when hiring contractors to clean property, remove debris or make repairs.

Simple rules to avoid becoming a victim of fraud:

- Only use contractors licensed by your state
- Get a written estimate and get more than one estimate
- Demand and check references
- Ask for proof of insurance, e.g., liability and Workmen's Compensation
- Insist on a written contract and refuse to sign a contract with blank spaces
- Get any guarantees in writing
- Make final payments only after the work is completed
- Pay by check.
- The best way to avoid fraud is to arm yourself against it by having a checklist to remind you of what you need to demand when hiring a contractor.

Source: <https://www.fema.gov/hurricane-irma>