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Serving Anson County and the Municipalities of Ansonville, Lilesville, McFarlan, Morven, Peachland, Polkton and Wadesboro.

Board of Education September 24 Meeting Rescheduled to October 1

The Anson County Board of Education will hold its next regular meeting on Monday, October 1 in the Administrative Office Board Meeting Room, located at 320 Camden Road in Wadesboro. The meeting will begin at 4:30 p.m. with the Closed Session. Open Session should begin at about 5:30 p.m.

CSX Train Derailed on Washed Out Tracks in Lilesville

On Sunday evening, September 16 nine locomotives and five railcars were washed off the tracks by floodwaters from Hurricane Florence at Haileys Ferry Road south of Highway 74 in Lilesville. CSX officials said the accident took place about 6 p.m. as Tropical Storm Florence pounded the area. According to Anson County Emergency Services, officials were still working to determine the cause, but said they believe heavy rain and flooding may have played a part by undermining the track bed. It's unclear what kind of cars overturned. A Hazmat team was called in to assess the situation, but no evacuations were ordered. Emergency officials said the weather made things difficult.

"None of the derailed cars were carrying hazardous material and none spilled their contents. Some of the locomotives released an undetermined amount of diesel fuel and motor oil," according to a statement from CSX. CSX is coordinating with the US Environmental Protection Agency through the recovery process.

CSX officials also released this statement: "At approximately 6 p.m. Sunday, a CSX train headed to Hamlet, NC derailed several railcars near Gravel Plant Road in Lilesville, NC. CSX personnel are responding to the scene and are in communication with Anson County emergency personnel as we work to assess the situation. The safety of everyone on site and the local community is our top priority. As more information is confirmed we will provide updates on the situation."

Initial reports indicated that the train was on fire, but when emergency crews arrived they said there was no fire. The train conductors received minor injuries and were taken to a local hospital. Charlotte and Monroe Fire Departments assisted Anson County agencies.

"The safety of everyone onsite and the surrounding community is our top priority," said Manager of CSX Media Relations Laura Phelps. "None of the derailed cars were carrying hazardous material and none spilled their contents.

We apologize to the community for any inconvenience this may have caused."

Haileys Ferry road just south of Highway 74 in Lilesville was closed, according to NCDOT. Emergency crews barricaded both sides of the crossing.



Lilesville Residents Forced to Evacuate After Hedrick Dam Break

A dam on Highway 145 in Lilesville failed on Monday, September 17 according to Anson County Sheriff Landric Reid. The dam is part of Anson County sand and gravel company, B.V. Hedrick.

Residents of about 12 homes in the area were evacuated for their safety. They were taken to the Lilesville Fire Department, and then went to stay with relatives or friends.

Highway 145 was shut down from Highway 74 to Haileys Ferry Road.

Officials emphasized that the damaged dam is not the Blewett Falls Dam.

B.V. Hedrick has another dam below the damaged dam that could be breached. These are not regulated dams, but inspectors with the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) were on the scene.

NC Wildlife Closures, Cancellations and Postponements Due to Hurricane

The N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission is announcing all agency-related event cancellations and/or postponements, as well as closures on game lands across the state, due to Hurricane Florence at ncwildlife.org/hurricane.

The page will be updated as new information becomes available.



First Home Game for Anson High School Cheerleaders and Bearcats this Friday

This Friday night, September 21, the Anson Bearcats will face off against the Statesville Greyhounds. The game will be played at Anson High School Stadium. Please look for additional information about the game and other items of importance on the Anson County Schools website, www.ansonschools.org.

In addition to having our first real home game of the season, you can also watch this group of enthusiastic Varsity Cheerleaders who enjoy cheering on their team. Come out and support them and the team this Friday night at 7:30 p.m. Let's go Cats!

The Anson High School Varsity Cheerleaders are pictured above. They are, from left, front: India Wall, Taylor Watson and Enderia Richardson. Second row: Roannalyn Rorie, Maliyah Caple, Erica Hatcher and Jamiyah Sturdivant. Third row: Ashley Huntley, Brooke Baucom, Ladaria Jackson and Madison McCollum. Fourth row: Rebecca Huntley and Brianna McCollum. Fifth row: Camryn Parson, Talia Marshall, Makayla Rikki Little and Kaziah Parsons. Makayla Little is not pictured.

Hurricane Florence Brings Rains, Strong Winds and Flooded Roads

As the reports of Hurricane Florence grew ever worse at the beginning of last week, area citizens and emergency personnel began making preparations. Early reports stated that the hurricane was headed directly for the North Carolina coast, possibly a category 4 or even 5 at landfall, predicted to linger instead of moving in and out quickly. Governor Roy Cooper presented televised news conferences imploring citizens to take the storm seriously, and ordered evacuation of coastal areas. The westbound traffic on Highway 74 increased dramatically, and by Tuesday and Wednesday (September 11 and 12) the highway traffic was basically bumper to bumper, crawling through Wadesboro.

Fortunately Florence's wind speed decreased to category 1 and tropical storm forces as it came ashore in the Wilmington area. But, as predicted, the storm's forward motion slowed to as low as 2-3 mph as it moved across North Carolina. The area it covered was huge, resulting in record setting amounts of rainfall throughout the state. "By storm's end, up to 40 inches of rain will have fallen in parts of North Carolina and far northeastern South Carolina," the National Hurricane Center said. Anson County experienced heavy rainfall and strong gusty winds that brought down trees and limbs as well as dislodging roof shingles.

Rivers and creeks in the affected areas are overflowing their banks in a large part of the Carolinas, causing extreme flooding and dangerous conditions. In Anson County more than 90 roads were closed as of press time. In all 31 people are dead as a result of Florence - 24 of those in North Carolina. The death toll is expected to rise.

The landscape in Anson County is covered with debris. Schools were out at the end of last week, and are still out as of press time because of damage and the roads situation. 88-year-old Clayborn Lee Wright of Anson County died in Union County due to flooding. Union County Sheriff Eddie Cathey said Mr. Wright was found dead Monday morning after his car was swept off the road by floodwater overnight. Cathey said the window of the car was open so Mr. Wright may have tried to escape.

Strong winds caused the old Polkton Shirt Factory on Highway 218 in Polkton to collapse Friday evening, several hours ahead of Florence's arrival to the area.

Wadesboro Primary School on Highway 52 South was designated as a shelter.

More than 3.5 million homes in coastal counties in North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia that total more than \$1 trillion in value were at risk of damage from the storm, according to a study by real estate website Zillow. The damage costs associated with Florence have not yet been determined. The current top 10 hurricanes are, in order from most expensive: Katrina, Harvey, Maria, Sandy, Irma, Andrew, Ike, Ivan, Wilma and Rita.

Here is more information:

- This statement was released by the Anson County Emergency Services: Even though the wind has quit blowing, and it has stopped raining there are trees down and roads flooded. The water is quickly rising and flooding roads. We ask that you stay home unless it is absolutely necessary to travel. Duke Energy and Pee Dee EMC are out restoring power. NC Department of Transportation and fire departments are clearing trees from roadways. Please stay home and let our energy companies restore power. NCDOT and first responders work safely to keep you safe.
- School information is available at www.ansonschools.org.
- Road information is available online at DriveNC.gov.
- The ReadyNC app provides information on your phone.
- NC State Highway Patrol statement: With prolonged, heavy rains and swift moving floodwaters, roads will be overtaken before reports are able to come in. It is imperative that you avoid leaving your home at this time. If you must leave, never drive through standing or moving water. Staying off the roads will also keep routes clear for emergency response teams, debris clearing teams and those evacuating. If you must leave, check DriveNC.gov to ensure your route is clear before you leave. Barriers are in place to keep you safe! Don't put your life (or responders) in danger by driving around them! Even if it looks clear, roads could be washed out or flooded. Safety starts with you.
- Motorists traveling through North Carolina can call 511 during the day for the latest road conditions and other important information, including crashes, weather-related closures and road construction. The calls transfer to neighboring states' 511 systems.
- Real-time flooding information on stream, rainfall and weather is available at fiman.nc.gov, the Flood Inundation Mapping and Alert Network.
- The NC Department of Transportation offers their Traveler Information Management System at tims.ncdot.gov/tims.
- Road closures, weather conditions and other information is available at www.localconditions.com. You can narrow your search down to Wadesboro.



The former Polkton Shirt Factory building collapsed.



Damage to Mayesville Road in Anson County.



Interstate 40 in Pender County looks like a river.



This is Gatewood Road in Anson County.