



**Buncombe County  
Permits & Inspections Department  
Emergency Permitting  
Frequently Asked Questions**

**1. Do I need a permit for work to mitigate damage caused by Tropical Storm Helene?**

Yes, permits are required to mitigate damage caused by a natural disaster, including work to stabilize the building, ensure safe occupancy, and restore to pre-storm condition. Buncombe County aims to process and issue emergency permits within one business day of application submittal. An emergency repair permit is needed for any building damage, below is the link to the form. It can be submitted online or brought into our office

[www.buncombecounty.org/common/permits/doc-central/emergency-repair.pdf](http://www.buncombecounty.org/common/permits/doc-central/emergency-repair.pdf)

Completed forms can be sent to  
[permitdocs@buncombecounty.org](mailto:permitdocs@buncombecounty.org)

Completed forms can also be brought to our office at  
30 Valley St  
Asheville, NC 28801

**If the damage was only electrical, plumbing, heating/cooling equipment**

Trade permits need to be obtained by the NC Licensed contractor through our online portal

<https://aca-prod.accela.com/buncombecon/default.aspx>

**2. Why is emergency permitting important?**

Emergency permitting after a natural disaster is critical for:



- Tracking the magnitude of damage
- FEMA reporting
- Home and business owners' insurance claims
- County tax records

**3. What is the cost of emergency permits to mitigate damage caused by Tropical Storm Helene?**

Permits fees have been waived for emergency repair permits.

**4. Do I need a General Contractor?**

Any construction project where the total cost of the undertaking is \$40,000 or more requires a NC Licensed General Contractor.

**5. What is the typical scope of work for this type of emergency permit?**

Examples include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Temporary roof repairs with plywood or plastic sheeting to make structures habitable or to prevent continuing damage due to rain and wind to buildings and exteriors;
- Covering exterior wall and window openings with plywood or plastic sheeting;
- Repairs to interior ceilings to make buildings habitable or to drain accumulated flood waters;
- Repairs to steps and railings (Remounting or Replacing requires a permit).
- Replacing window panes only;
- Temporary stabilization measures to avoid imminent building or structure collapse (Permit and inspection required if occupied);
- Removal & replacement of flooring;
- Removal & replacement of cabinets



- Removal and replacement of storm damaged drywall
- Removal and replacement of storm damaged insulation
- Removal and replacement of storm damaged electrical wiring, fixtures, and components
- Removal and replacement of storm-damaged mechanical systems

#### 6. To what degree can structures in the floodplain be repaired?

The construction value of the TS Helene emergency permits to remove and replace storm-damaged materials in the special flood hazard area (SFHA) must not substantially improve the structure.

**Substantial Improvement** is defined as any combination of repairs, reconstruction, rehabilitation, addition, or other improvement of a structure for which the cost equals or exceeds 50% of the structure's market value before the construction of the improvement.

**Substantial Damage** means damage of any origin sustained by a structure whereby the cost of restoring the structure to its before-damaged condition would equal or exceed 50% of the market value of the structure before the damage occurred. These costs are cumulative and tracked over a continuous one-year period, from CO/CC.

GIS link to identify if your property is within the floodplain or floodway  
<https://gis.buncombecounty.org/buncomap/>

See the link below for more information  
<https://www.buncombecounty.org/governing/depts/planning/default.aspx>

