

## **Notes from Statewide Multifamily Housing Industry on Hurricane Helene Relief** **Thursday, October 24, 2024**

**Governor's Needs Assessment:** [Governor's Initial Needs Assessment](#). \$53.6 billion needed for damages and recovery funding.

### **Property-Specific Challenges and Needs**

- **Main Concerns:**
  - Internet/phone service. A suggestion was made to bring Starlink locations to areas outside Asheville for improved internet access.
  - Clean water access. Although water has returned, it is still not potable.
  - Mud cleanup. Although there are no other locations at present for mud other than the Hendersonville transfer station, Asheville has opened up additional sites for disposal of hurricane debris and building materials.
  
- **Sediment Issues:**
  - Hot water heaters and sprinkler systems facing sediment build-up.
  - Success has been reported in bleeding water systems through fire hydrants to remove sediment faster.
  - Suggested pre-planning and frequent cleanings to avoid furnace failures.
  
- **Material Availability:**
  - No issues reported for siding, roofing, etc.
  - Furnace inspections are crucial before turning on the heat.
  - Furnace availability is limited.
  - Concern about transitioning to A2L refrigerants for HVAC systems.
  - Current stock of old systems is sufficient for now, but they will eventually phase out.
  
- **Staffing Support:**
  - BGSF and InterSolutions offered staffing for fire watch.
  
- **Volunteers:**
  - Discussion on organizing volunteers to support property needs.
  - Proposal for a dashboard to track community needs and available assistance.

### **Resource Sharing**

- **Supplies Available:**
  - USAA has a surplus of plastic silverware and other items. Members in need are encouraged to reach out.

### **Insurance, FEMA, and Leasing Discussions**

- **Insurance challenges.** Some reports of insurance not covering damages. Mixed feedback on pushback and challenges related to funding for property repairs.
  
- **Short-term vs. 18-month leases.** Short-term leases are scarce in Asheville, forcing some residents to move 50-100 miles away. This creates a concern that they may not return. Short-term leases are also difficult for properties with non-potable water.

- **FEMA involvement and strategies.** Jon, Bryan, and Laura Williamson plan to meet and develop strategies for working with FEMA and other agencies to address insurance and lease challenges. They will reinforce the importance of housing residents within their current communities to retain them.
- **Future Agenda:** AANC Government Affairs Committee is working on their next two-year plan and will address issues specific to Western North Carolina.

### **FEMA Virtual Informational Session**

- **Details:**
    - Date: Thursday, Oct. 24, 2 p.m. - 4 p.m. Registration was required by October 23<sup>rd</sup>.
    - Purpose: Inform vendors about requirements for leasing units through FEMA to house disaster survivors.
    - Audience: Property management companies and property owners of multifamily units in Western North Carolina.
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