



HENRY McMASTER
GOVERNOR

May 7, 2024

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500

Through: Regional Administrator Robert Samaan (Region IV)
Federal Emergency Management Agency
3005 Chamblee Tucker Road
Atlanta, GA 30341

Dear Mr. President:

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 5121 *et seq.* (Stafford Act), and implemented by 44 C.F.R. § 206.36, I respectfully request that you declare a major disaster for the State of South Carolina in connection with a dangerous storm system that moved through the State on the afternoon of April 20, 2024, producing high winds and large hail that impacted areas of York County, South Carolina. As detailed below, the extensive damage and other impacts associated with this event currently exceed local and state capacity to support community recovery.

Based on the National Weather Service damage survey after the storm, the late-afternoon storm system had a path more than 5.6 miles wide and 22.6 miles long. It produced 70- to 90-mph straight-line winds and large hail (2 inches to 2.75 inches in diameter). High winds and wind-driven hail caused significant damage to residences, businesses, and utility infrastructure. More than 25,000 homes were in the storm's path. Approximately 7,600 customers were without power—some for several days. The storm resulted in large amounts of vegetative and structural debris on municipal, county, and state roads. Based on validated damage assessment results, 16 homes were destroyed, and 12 other homes had major damage. In addition, hundreds and possibly thousands of roofs and vehicles saw hail damage. Four hundred residents have already submitted damage

information in the county’s online damage assessment survey. Local officials have expressed amazement that no deaths or serious injuries resulted.

In response to the April 20 severe weather, I have taken appropriate action under state law. I previously issued Executive Order No. 2023-11, which approved the April 25, 2023, S.C. Emergency Operations Plan (SCEOP) and directed that “[a]ll departments or agencies of the State shall execute, without delay, the emergency functions so designated in the Plan.” The SCEOP provides that “[t]he Governor or his/her designee may execute the SCEOP to support local situations when local resources are not adequate to sustain an effective response operation or when a significant State presence is required for immediate assistance.” Based on Executive Order No. 2023-11 and in accordance with the SCEOP, I authorized Director Kim Stenson of the S.C. Emergency Management Division (SCEMD) to activate the SCEOP for purposes of coordinating the State’s response to county requests for assistance and deploying personnel to impacted areas. County and state agencies and voluntary organizations coordinated to support local response, cleanup, and recovery operations.

Demographic information for York County, based on U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey five-year averages, is provided below. But these statistics do not convey the entire story: Several areas impacted by the wind and hail event are areas in the City of Rock Hill with lower income levels and resources than county averages (highest SVI category under Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Social Vulnerability Index 2020), as the enclosed social vulnerability and damage report maps confirm.

Percentage of population	<i>for whom poverty status is determined</i>	<i>receiving governmental assistance (SNAP)</i>	<i>pre-disaster unemployment rate</i>	<i>65 years and older</i>	<i>18 years and younger</i>	<i>with a disability</i>	<i>who speak a language other than English</i>
York County	8.40%	7.20%	4.70%	14.70%	23.80%	10.10%	7.90%
National Average	12.50%	11.50%	5.30%	16.50%	22.10%	12.90%	21.70%
State Average	14.40%	10.50%	5.20%	18.20%	21.50%	14.30%	7.60%

The State of South Carolina appreciates the continued assistance provided by FEMA and other federal agencies and personnel. As is often the case after emergencies and natural disasters, the State’s timely coordination and constructive collaboration with FEMA has been particularly helpful in assessing and validating storm-related damage and costs. I have enclosed the results of the May 1–2 Joint Preliminary Damage Assessment (JPDA), which documents the nature and extent of the damage and necessary assistance. I also have enclosed the required FEMA Form 010-0-13. The assessment of public infrastructure damage and response costs, as well as the compilation of the corresponding data, is still in progress, but it does not appear that such costs will reach the State’s Public Assistance (PA) threshold of \$9,417,902. In York County, however, PA-eligible costs, especially debris operations and local public utility repairs, are expected to exceed the

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county's PA threshold of \$1,297,614. If additional substantial damages or costs are identified and documented in York County or adjacent counties, the State will submit supplemental information and requests for any such counties as appropriate.

In light of the foregoing circumstances and considerations, I have determined that the situation and survivor recovery needs in York County are of such severity and magnitude that an effective response is beyond the capabilities of the State and the affected local governments, such that federal assistance is necessary to supplement the ongoing efforts and available resources of the State, local governments, disaster relief organizations, and compensation by insurance for disaster-related losses. Indeed, the impacts of the April 20 storm have resulted in threats to the safety, security, and welfare of residents of York County, particularly the most vulnerable residents in the storm's path. Accordingly, I am respectfully requesting federal assistance for York County with an incident period of Saturday, April 20, 2024, through Sunday, April 21, 2024. More specifically, I am requesting Individual Assistance (IA) for all IA programs, including the Community Disaster Loan (CDL) program. If approved, I certify that state and local government obligations and expenditures for the current disaster will comply with applicable cost-sharing requirements of the Stafford Act.

On behalf of the people of the State of South Carolina, thank you in advance for your consideration of this request and your assistance with this matter.

Yours very truly,



Henry McMaster

Enclosures: NWS Damage Survey Report
York County Damage Reports and Social Vulnerability
FEMA Form 010-0-13
IA Workbook with JPDA Results

National Weather Service (NWS) Damage Survey for 04/20/24 Damaging Wind Event...

...York County Wind...

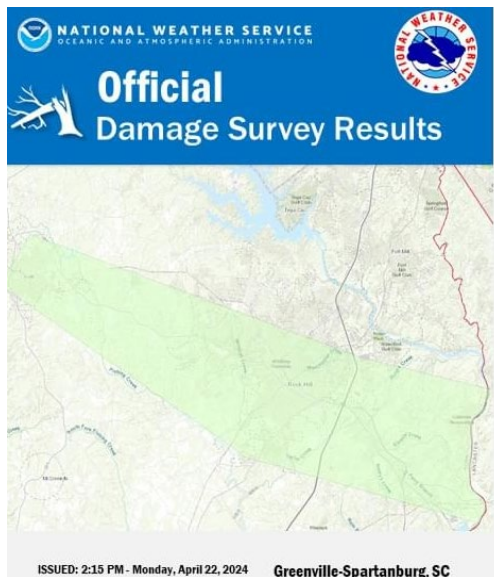
Rating: TSTM/Wind
Estimated Peak Wind: 90 mph
Path Length /statute/: 22.64 miles
Path Width /maximum/: 10000 yards
Fatalities: 0
Injuries: 0

Start Date: 04/20/2024
Start Time: 04:03 PM EDT
Start Location: 1 WNW York / York County / SC
Start Lat/Lon: 35.0018 / -81.2491

End Date: 04/20/2024
End Time: 04:47 PM EDT
End Location: 3 NNE Catawba / York County / SC
End Lat/Lon: 34.8822 / -80.8793

Survey Summary:

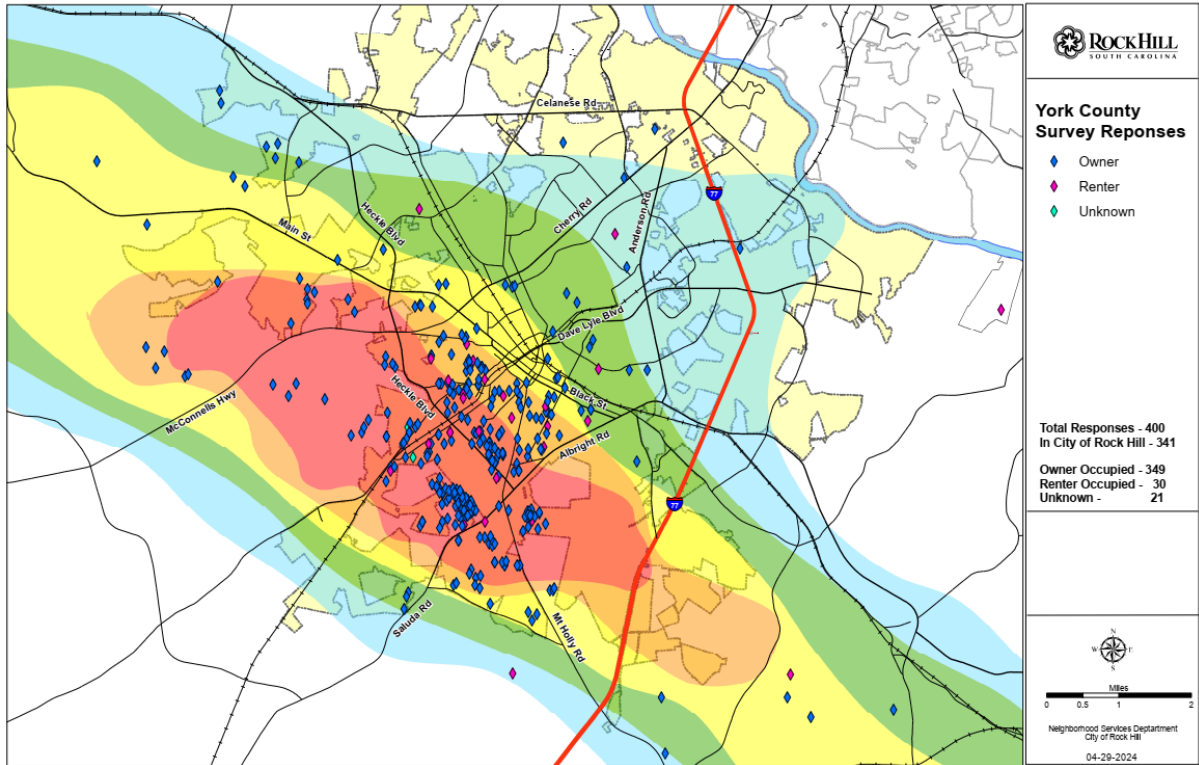
An intense severe thunderstorm impacted portions of York County on the afternoon of Saturday, April 20th. This storm produced a swath of extensive wind damage extending from the city of York to the city of Rock Hill and continuing to the Lancaster County line. Winds within this corridor were estimated to be between 70-90 mph, which downed large numbers of trees and power lines. Structural damage also occurred to a number of residences and businesses including collapsed gas station canopies, roof damage, blown out windows, and facade/siding damage. The storm also produced very large hail ranging from 2-2.75 inches (hen egg to baseball size). The combination of high winds and very large hail resulted in wind-driven hail that further exacerbated damage to structures, vehicles and trees. A few minor injuries also occurred.



York County (SC)	
Date	4/20/2024
Time (Local)	4:03 PM EDT
Est. Peak Winds	90 MPH
Path Length	22.64 mile
Max Width	5.68 miles
Injuries/Deaths	0/0

ISSUED: 2:15 PM - Monday, April 22, 2024 Greenville-Spartanburg, SC

York County Damage Survey Responses, April 20, 2024, Severe Weather



York County Social Vulnerability (CDC SVI Index 2020) (see Rock Hill in red box)
CDC/ATSDR Social Vulnerability Index 2020
 YORK COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA

