

ENC Health Currents: Local Hospitals Prepared For Flu Season To Pick Up

By [JARED BRUMBAUGH](#) · JAN 2, 2019

According to the most recent North Carolina Influenza Surveillance Summary, there have been 10 flu-related deaths in the state this season. With the typical peak of flu season still a few weeks away, hospitals across the state are noting an uptick in outpatient and emergency department visits for influenza-like illness.

Lost Fishing Gear Recovery Project Begins Mid-January

By [JARED BRUMBAUGH](#) · JAN 4, 2019

A large scale cleanup project to improve water quality, remove fishing debris and collect derelict crab pots from all of Eastern North Carolina's coastal sounds will soon get underway. Commercial fishers and North Carolina Marine Patrol will participate in the annual cleanup effort which takes from January 15th to February 7th

SBA Requires Explanation For New Disaster Loan Approval

By [JARED BRUMBAUGH](#) · JAN 7, 2019

The Small Business Administration is allowing North Carolinians to file a new disaster loan application for assistance with Hurricane Florence recovery, but applicants must provide an explanation for missing the deadline that's acceptable to the SBA.

2018 Farm Bill Could Help Expand Industrial Hemp In North Carolina

By [JARED BRUMBAUGH](#) · JAN 8, 2019

More than 80 prospective hemp growers in North Carolina were given approval yesterday to participate in the state's pilot program. Growers must now pay licensing fees to receive a permit to begin growing industrial hemp as an agricultural commodity.

Rural Surveys Help Identify Need For Broadband

By VALERIE CROWDER · JAN 9, 2019

Federal data shows almost 20 percent of North Carolina's rural residents lack access to high-speed internet. And that number could be even higher. P-R-E's Valerie Crowder reports state and local leaders are trying to get more precise data in eastern counties to begin closing the rural broadband gap.

State Board Approves Wayne County Schools' 'Restart' Application For Carver Heights Elementary

By VALERIE CROWDER · JAN 10, 2019

Members of the North Carolina State Board of Education unanimously voted Thursday afternoon to allow a low-performing elementary school in Goldsboro to remain under local control.

Public Comment Sought On Striped Bass Restrictions

By [JARED BRUMBAUGH](#) · JAN 11, 2019

Anglers could have less than two months to keep striped bass found in several Eastern North Carolina waterways. The State Fisheries Commission will decide on the proposed restriction next month.

Volunteers Help Clean Up Cape Hatteras As Government Shutdown Continues

By VALERIE CROWDER · JAN 14, 2019

More than a dozen members of a conservation group organized an "emergency cleanup" at [Cape Hatteras National Seashore](#) over the weekend to ensure the park remains pristine, while its employees are away during the partial government shutdown.

Coastal Cleanups Remove Tons Of Marine Debris

By [JARED BRUMBAUGH](#) · JAN 15, 2019

Floodwaters and storm surge during Hurricane Florence in September caused significant amounts of debris to wash into coastal waterways. Much of the trash is still littering shorelines more than four months after the storm. Volunteers in Atlantic Beach, Rodanthe and Holly Ridge help remove an estimated 6.5 tons of marine debris during a recent cleanup projects.

Aid For Hurricane Florence-Hit Community Colleges Part Of System's Legislative Priorities

By VALERIE CROWDER · JAN 15, 2019

Community college leaders plan to request additional funding to compensate tuition losses from enrollment declines due to Hurricane Florence in next fiscal year's state budget.

Deadline For STEP Program Extended To Feb. 10

By [JARED BRUMBAUGH](#) · JAN 16, 2019

The deadline to sign up for a program that provides partial repairs to homes damaged by Hurricane Florence has been extended to Feb. 10. Funded by the state and FEMA, the program helps people who were displaced by Hurricane Florence fix their homes to a liveable condition, while they wait for long-term repairs.

New Vehicle Ferry Sets Sail Soon

By [JARED BRUMBAUGH](#) · JAN 22, 2019

The North Carolina Department of Transportation's Ferry Division plans to replace an aging coastal ferry with a new, larger vessel. The M/V Rodanthe, which can carry about 40 vehicles at a time, will require fewer trips between Hatteras and Ocracoke Islands.

Gov. Cooper And His Administration Visit ENC

By [JARED BRUMBAUGH](#) · JAN 23, 2019

Governor Cooper and leaders from his administration were in Eastern North Carolina on Tuesday to discuss several issues affecting the region, including economic development, lack of broadband access, public safety, health care, and Hurricane Florence recovery.

Jones County Courthouse Remains Closed For Florence Repairs

By [VALERIE CROWDER](#) · JAN 30, 2019

Four months after historic flooding from Hurricane Florence caused widespread damage in Jones County, the county courthouse and jail remain closed for repairs.

ENC Towns Cope With Water And Sewer Challenges After Florence

By [VALERIE CROWDER](#) · JAN 31, 2019

About 300 people resided in the town of Trenton before Hurricane Florence brought historic flooding to Jones County four months ago. More than 100 homes in the town are now vacant, and only six businesses are open.

Voter Turnout Down In Two Florence Disaster Counties

By [VALERIE CROWDER](#) · FEB 4, 2019

Hurricane Florence contributed to a drop in voter turnout in two federally-designated disaster counties, according to a recent analysis of the midterm elections' turnout.

ENC Health Currents: Blood Pressure Drugs Linked To Increased Lung Cancer Risk

By [JARED BRUMBAUGH](#) · FEB 6, 2019

If you're among the 35 percent of adults in North Carolina who were told by a health professional that you have hypertension, chances are you've been prescribed blood pressure medication. An October 2018 study published in the British Medical Journal now links certain blood pressure drugs with an increased risk of lung cancer.

Coastal Land Trust Receives Grant To Protect Natural Area In Carteret County

By [JARED BRUMBAUGH](#) · FEB 6, 2019

The North Carolina Coastal Land Trust is one step closer to protecting more than 5,500 of natural area in Down East Carteret County. The land to be purchased is adjacent to the 14,000-acre Cedar Island National Wildlife Refuge, and includes 13 miles of waterfront and features estuarine, marsh, pocosin and longleaf pine forest.

Community Health Needs Assessment Underway In Carteret County

By [JARED BRUMBAUGH](#) · FEB 8, 2019

Carteret County health officials want feedback from residents as they prioritize health needs in the community, and create a plan to address those needs.

Rep. Walter Jones Jr. Dies On 76th Birthday

By [VALERIE CROWDER](#) · FEB 11, 2019

U.S. Representative Walter B. Jones Junior died Sunday afternoon. It was his 76th birthday. Jones represented Eastern North Carolina's 3rd Congressional District for almost 25 years, following his father who served in Congress for about the same length of time. PRE's Valerie Crowder spoke with two of Jones's political colleagues who knew him well.

FEMA Approves Case Management Program For Florence Survivors

By [JARED BRUMBAUGH](#) · FEB 13, 2019

Residents in Eastern North Carolina who are still recovering from Hurricane Florence may be eligible to get a case manager to help with long-term needs. Case managers will work with faith-based and volunteer organizations to provide help with financial, physical, emotional or spiritual well-being and referrals for materials and resources to help with rebuilding.

NCDOT, NC State Improving Longevity Of NC Bridges

By [JARED BRUMBAUGH](#) · FEB 14, 2019

A research team from NC State is designing and testing a carbon fiber retrofit system that strengthens deteriorating bridge support beams. Earlier this month, the team conducted a final full-scale beam test that was successful. The inexpensive and easy-to-install technology isn't a permanent solution, but it could allow aging bridges to accommodate larger vehicles.

FEMA Specialists In ENC This Week Offering Resiliency Advice

By [JARED BRUMBAUGH](#) · FEB 19, 2019

FEMA specialists will be in Eastern North Carolina this week offering tips on how to protect their families and homes against future disasters.

ENC Leaders Travel To Raleigh To Outline Recovery Priorities For Lawmakers

By [JARED BRUMBAUGH](#) · FEB 21, 2019

Leaders from several Eastern North Carolina communities met in Raleigh on Wednesday to talk about regional priorities for Hurricane Florence recovery and what needs to be done to mitigate damages from future storms.

NCDOT Holds Public Meetings For Major Road Work Planned In Craven County

By [JARED BRUMBAUGH](#) · FEB 25, 2019

A major highway project planned in Craven County will ease traffic congestion and make traveling to the coast quicker. The North Carolina Department of Transportation plans to upgrade Highway 70 in James City to interstate standards.

Local Input Sought On 10-Year Vision For Public Health In North Carolina

By [JARED BRUMBAUGH](#) · FEB 27, 2019

The North Carolina Institute of Medicine and the North Carolina Division of Public Health are drafting a 10-year plan to address health issues in the state. Eight community input sessions are planned across North Carolina to give community members an opportunity to rank the importance of health indicators.

Cooper Schedules Special Elections To Fill 3rd Congressional District Seat

By [VALERIE CROWDER](#) · FEB 27, 2019

Special elections to fill the 3rd Congressional District seat left vacant after Congressman Walter Jones Jr. died earlier this month are set to begin this spring.

Congressman Walter Jones's Legacy Of Independence

By [VALERIE CROWDER](#) · MAR 6, 2019

3rd Congressional District candidates are filing with the State Board of Elections this week. Several candidates have officially thrown their hats into the ring to fill the seat left vacant after Republican Congressman Walter Jones died last month. P-R-E's Valerie Crowder has more on the legacy of the congressman whose empty seat they're vying to fill.

ENC Health Currents: Fibrinogen Leads To Cognitive Decline In Alzheimer's Patients

By [JARED BRUMBAUGH](#) · MAR 6, 2019

Alzheimer's disease is a debilitating neurodegenerative disorder affecting around 170,000 seniors in North Carolina and more than 5 million people in the U.S. A team of researchers led by senior investigator Dr. Katerina Akassoglou with Gladstone Institutes in San Francisco showed for the first time that a blood-clotting protein called fibrinogen can destroy connections between neurons in the brain and result in cognitive decline.

US House Members Remember ENC Congressman Walter Jones

By [VALERIE CROWDER](#) · MAR 6, 2019

A bipartisan group of more than a dozen U.S. House members paid tribute on Tuesday night to Congressman Walter Jones, who represented Eastern North Carolina's 3rd congressional district for almost a quarter of a century before he died last month.

Congressman Butterfield Introduces Rural Early Voting Amendment

By [VALERIE CROWDER](#) · MAR 7, 2019

Congressman G-K Butterfield has introduced an amendment to the Democrats' sweeping elections reform bill – For the People Act – which would increase access to early voting sites in rural communities.

More Than Two Dozen Candidates File In ENC's 3rd Congressional District

By [VALERIE CROWDER](#) · MAR 11, 2019

Twenty six candidates have filed with the State Board of Elections to run for the vacant 3rd Congressional District seat, held by Rep. Walter Jones (R-Farmville) for almost a quarter of a century until his death last month.

Public Comment Sought On Proposed Bridge Replacements In Pamlico County

By [JARED BRUMBAUGH](#) · MAR 13, 2019

The North Carolina Department of Transportation will hold a public meeting Thursday evening on a proposal to replace two bridges in Pamlico County. Both bridges are located on N.C. 55 between Bayboro and Stonewall. Bridge #36 was built in 1960 and spans the South Bay River.

Report Finds Lack Of Services For Disabled People At Emergency Shelters

By [JARED BRUMBAUGH](#) · MAR 15, 2019

Disability Rights NC will hold a community forum to hear from people with disabilities about the lack of services and support at emergency shelters during and after Hurricane Florence. Staff with the organization monitored 26 disaster shelters across Eastern North Carolina to determine if people with disabilities received adequate care and treatment.

ECU Chancellor Announces Resignation

By [VALERIE CROWDER](#) · MAR 18, 2019

After leading East Carolina University for three years, Cecil Staton announced on Monday that he's stepping down.

ENC Counties Receive Funding For Infrastructure Improvements

By [JARED BRUMBAUGH](#) · MAR 19, 2019

Gov. Cooper announced Tuesday that communities across the state will get \$127 million in loans and grants to improve water and sewer systems.

Disability Rights Advocates Work For Inclusion In Disaster Planning Process

By VALERIE CROWDER · MAR 27, 2019

Inaccessible shelters, untrained shelter staff and limited services and resources created unnecessary challenges for people with disabilities during and after Hurricane Florence. Disability Rights North Carolina, the state's disability rights monitoring group, released a report in February describing these findings.