



Damage and flooding in Fort Myers, Florida, following Hurricane Milton.

Hurricane Milton, the third hurricane to hit Florida this year, made landfall in Siesta Key, just south of Sarasota, Wednesday night as a Category 3 storm with winds of 120 mph, heavy rainfall and tornadoes before cutting across the Florida Peninsula and heading out into the Atlantic. The storm has left more than 3 million customers without power, destroyed buildings and houses, and ripped the roof off of Tropicana Field, the stadium of professional baseball team the Tampa Bay Rays, where emergency workers were staying. ¹ St. Petersburg received more than 16 inches of rain in just three hours, and four deaths have been confirmed. ¹ The full impact of the storm is still unfolding and the risk of more power outages, along with flash, urban and river flooding, strong winds and storm surge, remains high. There is significant concern for vulnerable populations, including those who are elderly, bedridden, have chronic illness or who depend on powered medical devices.

Across the Southeast, communities are still reeling from the effects of **Hurricane Helene**, which made landfall in Florida less than two weeks prior as a Category 4 storm and is responsible for at least 232 deaths across six states. The hurricane came onshore in the Big Bend region on September 26 and tore through inland communities of Georgia, the Carolinas and Tennessee, unleashing catastrophic flooding, landslides and extensive power and water outages. The resounding impacts of Hurricane Helene are already being felt across the US, as one of the largest intravenous-fluid manufacturing plants in the country, located near Asheville, North Carolina, was badly damaged in the storm. The factory's closure has caused shortages nationwide, leading some hospitals to delay elective surgeries and risking potential disruption to continuity of care of dialysis patients. ²

Shelter remains a significant need in northwestern North Carolina, as entire communities have been displaced and homes that were damaged cannot be occupied due to structural impact, water damage, mold and/or contamination. Many of the displaced are in shelters or sleeping in tents and other temporary accommodations, with some shelters housing more than

FAST FACTS

- **Hurricane Milton** made landfall just south of Tampa, Florida, Wednesday night as a Category 3 hurricane, unleashing winds of 120 mph, tornadoes and flash floods across the Florida peninsula. At least four deaths have been confirmed and more than 3 million customers are without power.
- **Hurricane Helene** slammed into Florida's Big Bend region on September 26 as a Category 4 hurricane, and barreled through Georgia, the Carolinas and Tennessee, causing more than 230 confirmed deaths across six states. Affected communities across several states have yet to regain power or access to clean water.
- The short-term damage and long-term implications of the storm are extensive, with economic and property losses from Hurricane Helene anticipated to be up to \$250 billion.
- In 2024, there have been **13 named Atlantic storms**, including **six hurricanes** that have made landfall in the United States and Territories. These storms have caused more than **320 deaths** in the US and Territories alone.

OUR RESPONSE

- In preparation for **Hurricane Milton**, International Medical Corps was requested by the Florida Division of Emergency Management to prepare a mobile medical unit and is coordinating with local partners to prepare to support urgent needs.
- In response to **Hurricane Helene**, International Medical Corps has deployed teams to Florida, Georgia and North Carolina, including a **mobile medical team**, and is coordinating closely with partners in Tennessee.
- International Medical Corps has distributed 1,512 wound-care kits, 3,594 hygiene kits and almost 7,900 hygiene items, including first-aid supplies, mosquito repellent, handwashing stations and water, water bladders and tanks to 24 health centers and local partners.

¹ <https://www.cnn.com/weather/live-news/hurricane-milton-path-florida-10-10-24/index.html>

² <https://www.reuters.com/business/environment/hurricane-impact-baxter-further-constrain-iv-fluid-supply-hhs-says-2024-10-09/>

300 people. At least 10 counties have each opened multiple shelters and though the number of residents constantly shifts, there is a significant presence of veterans and people experiencing homelessness. There is also a significant need for healthcare services, but local health centers are facing many challenges in restoring services, including disrupted sanitation and sewer systems. Water-treatment plants in Bakersville, Burnsville and Spruce Pine are non-operational due to flooding, and all indications suggest that even temporary recovery will take several months, prolonging sanitation concerns in homes and health centers. Though access to electricity is slowly returning, there is no clear timeline for full restoration of power.³

As southeast Georgia remains on multiple severe weather warnings and watches, including tropical storm, flash flood and storm surge warnings from the passing Hurricane Milton, the situation on the other side of the state—affected by Hurricane Helene—is beginning to stabilize. However, as of October 10, nearly 60,000 homes were still largely without power or water in the hardest-hit north-central region near Augusta and south-central region near Valdosta. Thanks to a push from the state to quickly reconnect health centers to essential services like electricity, many health centers are preparing to reopen this week or next. However, many of the health centers in the region were unable to maintain cold-chain storage during the power outages and are now without essential pharmaceuticals.

In Tennessee, communities are still working to clear the debris caused by river flooding. There is a significant need for vaccinations—such as tetanus, Hepatitis A and flu shots—as community members work on cleanup efforts and face increased risk of injury and contamination. In Florida, recovery efforts from Hurricane Helene are still underway, although some activities stalled the past week as communities braced themselves for Hurricane Milton's arrival.

Hurricanes Helene and Milton have caused catastrophic destruction for millions, with long-term economic, shelter, health and psychosocial impacts. As the full impact of Hurricane Milton becomes clearer, needs involving medical care, mental health support, and water, sanitation and hygiene are expected to increase.

International Medical Corps' Response

In preparation for **Hurricane Milton's** landfall in Florida this week, International Medical Corps was requested by the Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM) to prepare a mobile medical unit mission-ready package (MRP). International Medical Corps has readied all MRP resources—including clinical and operational staff and volunteers, supplies and equipment, and infrastructure assets—to deploy and be operational within 48 hours of a request by FDEM. The team also is coordinating with our existing partners and distribution centers to distribute emergency supplies, equipment and other items to support response efforts, and is working with the Florida Association of Community Health Centers to meet the needs of federally qualified health centers (FQHCs) affected by Hurricane Milton.

International Medical Corps is continuing our multi-state response to the impacts of **Hurricane Helene** across Florida, Georgia, North Carolina and Tennessee. To date, we have facilitated the shipment and distribution of 3,594 hygiene kits, 1,512 wound-care kits and almost 7,900 hygiene and emergency items to 24 sites, including health facilities, community centers and relief centers across the region.

This week, International Medical Corps is deploying two dozen clinical volunteers and support staff to **North Carolina** to provide essential primary care and behavioral health services in shelters. International Medical Corps teams will embed in four shelters in Buncombe County—including two general-population, one family-assistance and one medical-needs shelter—where our volunteers will be providing 24-hour care. The emergency response team is also staffing a mobile medical unit to provide care in hard-to-reach communities in the mountains, including the neighboring counties of Henderson and McDowell.

International Medical Corps is coordinating closely with the North Carolina Primary Care Association (PCA) and the National Association of Community Health Centers to identify and collaboratively support the needs of FQHC and health partners across the state. The team is supporting 14 health centers by distributing hygiene kits as well as additional sanitation and hygiene supplies, and delivering 1,000-gallon water tanks and water to each center. International Medical Corps also is continuing to support sanitation needs across northwest North Carolina communities, as the high demand for sanitation there has made access to portable toilet solutions exceedingly challenging for health centers.



An International Medical Corps team member unloads a shipment of hygiene kits and other urgent supplies at a warehouse of a partner FQHC in Valdosta, Georgia.

³ <https://www.citizen-times.com/story/news/local/2024/10/08/when-will-power-be-restored-duke-energy-western-north-carolina-buncombe/75571308007/>

International Medical Corps is also coordinating with the Public Health department of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians to identify ways to support dialysis clinics, as two of the main insulin manufacturing locations in the US were impacted by both Helene and Milton—drastically reducing the amount of insulin production and availability.

In **Florida**, International Medical Corps delivered a trauma kit to Steinhatchee Community Center, where community members in need of support or services gather. The kit includes extensive supplies for wound cleaning, dressings and protective gear, as well as advanced medical instruments. The medical staff at the center was not equipped to manage the volume of acute injuries presented by people arriving at the facility, caused by injuries sustained during the cleanup and removal of debris from property. Similar needs were also raised in **Tennessee**, where International Medical Corps is procuring immunization supplies, including 200 doses of tetanus vaccines.

In **Georgia**, International Medical Corps is coordinating with the Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency (GEMA), the Georgia PCA, the Georgia Department of Public Health’s Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and Medical Associates Plus, an FQHC network in Augusta with 19 health centers. We are procuring items that include insulin travel cases, water bladders, batteries, soap dispensers and feminine hygiene products for the FQHC, and providing an additional 1,350 hygiene kits to the EMS and GEMA. Access to clean water remains a significant need in many rural areas, as many individual homes require electricity for their water pump to function. As full restoration of power is still an estimated several weeks out, there is a high concern for these communities.

International Medical Corps in the US and Territories

International Medical Corps has been an emergency responder in the United States and Caribbean since 2005, when we partnered with local community clinics overwhelmed by Hurricane Katrina. In the US, International Medical Corps works with national, state and local partners and agencies in the healthcare system to deploy emergency response teams in response to disasters and address the significant challenges that face domestic healthcare services.

Response to Hurricane Helene				
36 health facilities supported	17 FQHCs supported	3 state governments supported	2 non-profit organizations supported	
1,512 wound-care kits distributed	3,594 hygiene kits distributed	7,874 hygiene products distributed	511 NFIs distributed	5,400 hygiene kits in transit
435,294 indirect beneficiaries				

2024 Atlantic Hurricane Season Response*

