

## North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality

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### **Heavy rains wipe out drought and dry conditions in N.C.**

**RALEIGH** – As storm recovery efforts continue, North Carolina officials announced Thursday that the storm's heavy rains helped eliminate lingering drought and abnormally dry conditions throughout the Tar Heel State.

For the first time since May 12, North Carolina is not experiencing any drought or dry conditions. The U.S. Drought Monitor releases its drought map for the state every Thursday and it is posted online at [www.ncdrought.org](http://www.ncdrought.org).

North Carolina received more than three months of rainfall in just one week, the North Carolina State Climate Office reported.

Last Thursday's map showed that more than two-thirds of North Carolina was experiencing either drought or abnormally dry conditions with the worst conditions, severe drought, blanketing four counties in the Charlotte area. But widespread, heavy rainfall that measured between 4 inches and 20 inches wiped out any lingering dry conditions. Some areas of the mountains received more than 10 inches of rain while the western Piedmont received between 3 inches and 5 inches, the eastern Piedmont received between 4 inches and 8 inches of rain, and portions of southern coastal areas received as much as 20 inches of rain.

### **Storm recovery efforts continue**

To assist in storm recovery along the coast, N.C. Department of Environmental Quality Secretary Donald van der Vaart on Thursday activated an emergency general permit for beach bulldozing for dune reconstruction in the eight oceanfront counties. The permit waives the \$200 permit fee and enables a quicker storm recovery. The Division of Coastal Management will be issuing the emergency general permits to property owners.

State water quality staff continue to monitor concentrated animal feeding operations and wastewater facilities to assess post-storm conditions and determine impacts.

DEQ officials say there have been no reported impacts to drinking water systems and no reported fish kills. There were more than 100 wastewater system overflows due to the rain, and a couple of dairy lagoons experienced small overflows in Wilkes and Alleghany counties. Other hog lagoons in the eastern part of the state were monitored closely because the level of the lagoon started to rise, but did not overflow.

The state Division of Marine Fisheries has recovered 38 tires, most of them along the shore at Bogue Banks, from the North Carolina coast since Oct. 2. The tires, which were placed in coastal waters years ago to create artificial reefs, typically wash ashore and have to be cleaned up after big storms. All of the tires were either taken to a waste transfer station for recycling or were stored by the towns for the state agency to pick up for recycling later.

Monday evening, N.C. Marine Patrol began assisting the Coast Guard with a search and rescue mission for a missing crabber from Beaufort County. Marine Patrol officers determined the last area the fishermen was fishing by finding which of his crab pots were freshly baited and those that were not baited, indicating the area for the

search to concentrate. Marine Patrol continued to help in the search until a fisherman found the body Wednesday.

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State Dam Safety staff reported today that water impoundments behind two Fayetteville area dams with problems identified during the storm have been lowered and don't represent a hazard. Local public works personnel have pumped and hauled water in the impoundment at Glenville Lake Dam so that the water levels are where they were before the heavy rain started. Also, officials have drawn down the lake level by 3.5 feet at the Wooded Lake Dam in Fayetteville. Dam Safety staff are monitoring the site, with morning and afternoon visits planned until the impoundment is drained.

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