Campuses Begin Cleaning Up and Assessing Damage After Hurricane Irene

By Charles Huckabee

As Tropical Storm Irene, downgraded from a hurricane, churned north into New England on Sunday, universities along the Eastern Seaboard that had suffered hours of buffeting winds and slashing rains on Saturday were clearing debris and assessing damages. Power outages were widespread, and many institutions reported problems like toppled trees and leaks in some buildings. But none regretted having prepared for the worst, with emergency-planning teams on many campuses getting thanks for well-tuned responses.

At East Carolina University, in Greenville, N.C., workers were removing fallen branches and uprooted trees, cleaning up water damage to some dormitory rooms, and checking out reports of other minor damage. The damage was "more than superficial, but not catastrophic," Mary Schulken, director of public affairs, said on Sunday. And even though dormitories were near capacity at the time the storm's winds lashed the area, university
officials were grateful that there were no injuries. "We'd like to think that's because we worked very hard to prepare," Ms. Schulken said. "We asked students who did not have homes to go to, to stay in their dorms, and we provided activities to encourage them to stay there."

The university had to relocate about two dozen students from the upper floors of a high-rise dorm, Greene Residence Hall, she said, after a pipe broke and spilled water into their rooms. Workers were cleaning and drying the rooms on Sunday. The university was also checking out many other reports of water leaking into buildings, and dealing with standing water, particularly in areas where streams and creeks cross the campus. But the water had begun to recede on Sunday and was expected to continue draining away over the next couple of days.

The campus will remain closed on Monday, Ms. Schulken said, so repairs can continue uninterrupted by traffic, and so people who commute to the campus will not have to drive through streets in the area that are still blocked by water or debris. East Carolina will not have a dollar estimate of the damage for several days, she said. "Our assessment today looked more at what do we have to do to be open than what will it cost to repair this," she said.

Cliff Hollis, East Carolina U.

Greene Residence Hall, at East Carolina U., suffered damage during the severe weather, leading to the relocation of some students.

Elsewhere, Old Dominion University, in Norfolk, Va., was experiencing telephone and power outages on Sunday. The university said it hoped students could move into residence halls on Tuesday and classes could begin on Wednesday, but that depended on restoring power.
As of Sunday afternoon, most of Williamsburg, Va., had no power, including the campus of the College of William & Mary, which canceled classes at least through Tuesday. Campus trees suffered considerable damage. Meanwhile, the director of William & Mary's Center for Conservation Biology, Bryan Watts, was tracking a migratory bird—a whimbrel named Chinquapin—that had earlier been fitted with a satellite transmitter and that appeared to have flown though the most dangerous part of the storm on its way from Canada to the tropics, says a news article on the college's Web site. "We really expect that Chinquapin will probably make it," said Mr. Watts, noting that the bird was in the vicinity of Caribbean islands, rather than over open ocean.

Washington College, on Maryland's Eastern Shore, reported no damage to buildings but some damage to trees. Students who were already on campus all spent Saturday night in one residence hall, which never lost power. The Web site of St. Mary's College of Maryland remained offline Sunday evening.

In Philadelphia, there were still concerns about rising water on Sunday afternoon, as rain-swollen rivers pushed through and around the city. But the University of Pennsylvania emerged largely unscathed, according to the student newspaper, The Daily Pennsylvanian. And Temple University reported that its main campus had weathered the storm well, and that plans were going ahead for a welcoming concert at the university's Liacouras Center on Sunday evening.

Farther north, Irene pushed through with less strength than had been feared, but still enough to down power lines and cause flooding on some campuses. Colleges advised students returning to campuses to use caution.

In New Jersey, fallen trees closed a number of roads leading to Princeton University's campus. Rowan University reported that its campuses, in Glassboro and Camden, had weathered the severe weather "remarkably well," but both campuses will remain closed on Monday. The Glassboro campus had served as an emergency shelter for some 1,200 people evacuated from the Atlantic City area over the past several days. Rowan plans to reopen both campuses on Tuesday, and classes will begin next week.

Facilities personnel at the State University of New York at Stony Brook reported no damage to buildings and only minor damage to trees on the main and Southampton campuses, both on New York's Long Island.
Long Island University will remain closed Monday.

SUNY's New Paltz campus, in a region that was heavily flooded on Sunday, reported that all students and employees who were on the campus during the storm were safe, but the university faces significant cleanup tasks. An administration building and the student center experienced basement flooding, it said, and power was shut down to several academic buildings as a precaution. Campus telephones and online services were not working. Given the uncertainty over conditions in the area and over when power and services can be restored, classes are canceled on Monday and the university asked that only essential personnel report to work.

Marist College, in Poughkeepsie, N.Y., experienced flooding in several areas, some of it caused by a water-main break off the campus. Classes remained canceled for Monday, and administrators and student leaders were meeting Sunday afternoon to further assess the situation.

Sarah Lawrence College and Quinnipiac University both experienced electrical outages overnight to parts of their campuses.

Sarah Lawrence's president, Karen R. Lawrence, said in a post-storm update on the college's Web site on Sunday that the campus, in New York's Westchester County, was still dealing with intermittent outages. "The good news is that everyone on campus is safe and secure," she wrote, giving credit to the college's crisis-planning team "for our having come through this event as intact as we have."

Quinnipiac, in Connecticut, reported on Sunday that power had been restored to a nonresidential campus and that another campus was running on generator power. Its main campus, however, never lost power.

The threat to upper New England had not passed as of Sunday evening, though. The University of Vermont warned shortly before 6 p.m. that strong winds were likely to continue for several hours, and recommended that people stay indoors because of the danger of trees falling over in the rain-soaked ground.

Lawrence Biemiller contributed to this report.
Most area schools back in session

By Jackie Drake
The Daily Reflector
Wednesday, August 31, 2011

Most students are back in school today as East Carolina University, Pitt Community College and all but one public school open for the first time since Hurricane Irene swept through eastern North Carolina.

G.R. Whitfield School in Grimesland, the only remaining school without power Tuesday, will be closed. All others will run on normal schedules. Buses will follow regular routes where possible.

“We believe that for the vast majority of this county, buses will be able to complete their normal routes,” spokeswoman Heather Mayo said. “Slight modifications are possible in some areas where roads are completely impassible. If a student lives on a street where a downed tree prevents driving, parents are encouraged to try and make every effort to get their child to the next possible stop.”

Cafeteria staff transferred food from schools without power to prevent loss, according to Child Nutrition Director Leann Seelman. Service may deviate slightly from the published menu.

“We've been scrambling a bit, but we'll have enough food for all our students,” Seelman said. “We've been doing assessments and monitoring temperatures very closely for food safety. We're confident it is safe; we're not going to take any chances.”
ECU and PCC also are open on regular schedules today. Power is restored to almost all buildings on both campuses, with the exception of ECU's Howard House, where the news office is located.

The cost of hurricane-related repairs at ECU could reach $1 million, according to a preliminary estimate from Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration Rick Niswander.

“That includes everything we know of right now. That's what we think it will take to get everything back the way it was,” ECU spokeswoman Mary Schulken said. “We had a lot of trees down, but from a facilities perspective, it could have been worse,” Niswander said, adding that the university controls 6 million square feet of building space. Leaks and roof damage were prevalent throughout campus — especially in the historic Spilman Building — but structures remain largely intact.

Niswander estimates at least 70 trees larger than 10 inches in diameter were blown over or so severely damaged they had to be removed. The central mall where many of the trees had fallen was mostly clear Tuesday.

“We've got hundreds of people working really hard to get campus back in shape in a relatively short amount of time,” Niswander said.

Five students in Greene Hall are being relocated to other dorms while repairs are made to rooms on Greene's upper floor, which sustained water damage when a pipe broke Saturday during the storm.

Insurance, state and federal funding will cover repairs at ECU, Niswander said. U.S. Sen. Kay Hagan surveyed the destruction and recovery efforts during a Tuesday morning tour. She called the damage at Spilman “amazing” and commented on the loss of the “beautiful heritage trees.”

She said the cleanup effort at ECU was “an example of North Carolina's community spirit hard at work.”

Hagan said she signed a letter asking Congress for supplemental funding for damage relief and said she feels confident a federal disaster declaration will take place.

“Having surveyed the damage across our eastern North Carolina communities, it is clear that we have our work cut out for us,” she said.

Students and employees returning to Pitt Community College will observe some storm debris and trees that have not been removed, but sidewalks, parking lots and streets have been cleared, spokeswoman Susan Nobles said.

“We still have some buildings that are continuing to get repairs,” Nobles said. “Our facilities services staff have been working tirelessly since Saturday night.”
Some buildings have missing ceiling tiles and locations where there were leaks, but workers will continue to repair roofs and ceilings while classes resume. One mobile unit was damaged by a falling tree.

A damage estimate for the campus was not available. The college's Facilities Services Department has reported that the facilities are safe for normal operations.

“It's not going to be exactly the same as before, but I think we are going to be pretty close,” PCC President Dennis Massey said. “We realize it's not easy, but we need to progress with the semester.”

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School districts and college campuses in North Carolina's eastern counties are coping with hurricane damage while trying to kick off a new school year. "We're seeing widespread wind and water damage," said Eileen Townsend, chief of insurance at the state Department of Public Instruction.

Many school districts and individual schools remain closed a third day today. East Carolina University will reopen today after suffering an estimated $1 million in damage. Some community colleges will remain closed; one, Pamlico Community College, was serving as a shelter for about 60 people Tuesday.

Tyrrell County's school system has closed until further notice. School leaders there reported 3 feet of water mixed with sewage in two of its three schools and in the central office, where files were destroyed.

Other school districts had roofs partially torn off. Some still have power outages and food spoilage in cafeterias. Some will be dealing with transportation problems because roads are impassable.

In Pamlico County, a flooded middle school will be closed indefinitely. School officials there plan to move sixth- and seventh-graders to elementary schools and eighth-graders to the high school.

Dare County schools north of Oregon Inlet on the Outer Banks are scheduled to reopen today, except for schools on heavily damaged Hatteras Island.

Much of the damage will be covered by insurance. But transportation costs could rise as districts have to change bus routes to work around battered roads.

The state's schools had already suffered $25 million in tornado damage this year. "It's definitely been a tough, tough summer," Townsend said.

Sixteen community colleges operate in the affected counties, said Linda Weiner, a vice president with the N.C. Community College System. Nine were closed one or two days this week, and some will remain closed today.
and beyond. "Everyone is trying assess the damage, figure out where they are and try to reopen," she said.

At least two staffers at Pamlico lost everything. "There are a lot of employees we know have suffered a lot of personal damage to their homes," she said.

ECU closed Monday and Tuesday to clean up downed trees, broken windows, battered roofs and water damage.

Rick Niswander, vice chancellor for finance and administration, estimated that the campus was littered with 70 large trees that had been toppled or severely damaged by wind.

A 1920s-era administrative building was hit hard, with part of the roof missing and waterlogged ceilings. That building, called Spilman, houses the chancellor's office and conference room.

In Greene residence hall, a broken storm drain pipe sent water into the building. About two dozen students were hustled into a lobby to ride out the storm. Five of them have moved to another dorm while repairs are underway.

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State DOT helicopter pilots Ray Edwards, left, and Terry Carlyle stand on the edge of a washed out N.C. 12 after flying officials over to view the damage.

N.C. 12 vulnerable to more damage from storm season

BY BRUCE SICELOFF - Staff Writer

Engineers for the state Department of Transportation began scratching their heads Monday over how to mend the latest storm-related breaches to N.C. 12 on Hatteras Island, and a coastal geologist warned that Outer Banks residents could expect more damage to the fragile highway.

"This was a little storm," East Carolina University geology professor Stanley R. Riggs said. "If we get one or two more of these in September and October, you're going to have a whole bunch of holes in the Outer Banks out there."

Hurricane Irene on Saturday left a cluster of four gaps across N.C. 12 about five miles south of Oregon Inlet in the Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge, where water sloshed back and forth Monday between the Atlantic Ocean and Pamlico Sound.

Two more breaches were opened on the road farther south, just north of the village of Rodanthe, on a vulnerable stretch of road that DOT had fortified with big sandbags after it was damaged by a nor'easter in 2006.
The new gaps are near the sites of ancient inlets that have opened and closed in the Outer Banks over the past four centuries: New Inlet, which closed in 1945, and Chickinacommock Inlet, which closed around 1745. Riggs was the lead author of a paper published in 2009 that predicted that future storms would open fresh inlets in those same locations.

Irene appears to have caused worse damage to N.C. 12 than Hurricane Isabel did eight years ago, when it severed the road between Frisco and Hatteras near the southern end of the island. It took DOT two months and cost $5 million to make that repair and reopen the road.

"We really want to get Highway 12 open," Gov. Bev Perdue said at a press briefing in Raleigh. She said she was surprised to see how bad the damage was when she flew over Hatteras Island after Irene moved out of the state. "It's wide, and it's deep," Perdue said. "We went through this after the last hurricane, and it took a couple of months to get the traffic moving."

Greer Beaty, DOT spokeswoman, said no estimates were available on how much money and time will be needed to repair and reopen N.C. 12. It's the mainland link for seven villages on the southern end of Hatteras Island, and for the village of Ocracoke, where tourists and residents rely primarily on the short ferry to Hatteras.

The Hatteras-Ocracoke ferry is closed, partly because Irene dumped a few feet of sand on the N.C. 12 link from the ferry terminal on the east end of the island and the village on the west end. Both islands depend heavily on tourism, and the N.C. 12 rupture has dashed their hopes for the Labor Day holiday weekend.

DOT ferried repair crews and other first responders to Hatteras and Ocracoke islands Monday. There was no word on when island residents would be allowed to use the ferries to Ocracoke from Cedar Island and Swan Quarter, and an emergency ferry to Hatteras Island from Stumpy Point.

DOT employees described the N.C. 12 gaps as a "new inlet on Pea Island" when they posted photos of the damage online. Beaty said that was probably a mistake, and she had the photo captions changed to say "breach on Pea Island."

"I don't think we want to call that an inlet until we're sure we know what it is," Beaty said.

Riggs, the geology professor, said DOT's repeated efforts to stabilize the slender highway only make the island itself narrower and more fragile.
because they interfere with the Outer Banks' age-old tendency to migrate toward the west - retreating on the ocean side and growing on the sound side.

He said DOT was foolish to move ahead in July with plans to build a $216 million replacement for the 2.7-mile Bonner Bridge over Oregon Inlet at the northern end of Hatteras Island.

"That bridge should not be built because it will be a bridge to nowhere," Riggs said. "Somewhere between the next storm and the next decade or two, those islands are collapsing. It is foolish to build a quarter-billion-dollar bridge to an island that is disappearing. They cannot hold that road any more."

Carol Dawson, who owns the 58-room Cape Hatteras Motel in the Hatteras Island village of Buxton, faulted DOT for having failed in recent years to stabilize the island and protect the highway.

She said state and federal officials worry more about birds in the Pea Island refuge than about residents and businesses that rely on the highway.

"We all know birds are protected," Dawson said. "A million dollars of our tax dollars have been spent for those Yogi Bear rangers to count eight bird eggs, but they can't stabilize our beaches. We're taxpayers, and we deserve a passage to the mainland just like anyone else."

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Residents without power 'trying to be patient'
By Kathryn Kennedy
The Daily Reflector
Tuesday, August 30, 2011

Greenville Utilities crews were met with a “systemwide disaster” Saturday, officials say. Hurricane Irene's punishing winds left 45,000 of GUC's 65,000 customers without electricity.

By Tuesday afternoon, the number had dwindled to 700. The accomplishment provides little comfort to those still in the dark.

“We're right here on the main drag and still nothing,” said Tami Parnell, a resident of Reedy Branch Apartments on 10th Street. “I know we're not the only ones. We're trying to be patient.”
Parnell said she hadn't had a decent meal in four days, but the Salvation Army was beginning to provide plates to her community.

About 20 of her neighbors also were without power Tuesday. Parnell pointed to chairs scattered on the ground-floor landing, explaining residents had been grilling food before it spoils and staying out in the cooler night air.
“We've become a close-knit group,” she said.
Terry Wilson, a Slay Drive resident and friend of Parnell, had a tip for those missing hot water.
“I've been managing,” she said. “When you work out in the yard clearing limbs, you work up a sweat, and that cold shower isn't so bad.”
Hundreds of customers served by Progress Energy and Dominion Power in Ayden, Bethel, Grifton and Grimesland have yet to regain electricity. Scattered outages also exist in Falkland, Farmville and Winterville.

Greenville officials announced Tuesday evening that 10 trees still are in roadways. City Manager Wayne Bowers said the trees will be removed as soon as GUC removes the wires, and the streets will be opened.

A contract tree removal company has mobilized and will begin work at 7 a.m. today in west Greenville and the Tar River-university neighborhood, Bowers said. City crews should complete one round of debris removal in Ironwood and all residential areas north of the Tar River by Thursday.

With power restored Tuesday at Christy's Euro Pub, other issues were illuminated. Owner Tandi Mahn spent the afternoon cleaning out the Jarvis Street restaurant's walk-in freezer. Frustrated, she tossed dozens of eggs, packs of melted butter and spoiled cheese into the garbage.

“Downtown had power, and all those businesses were open and making money, and we have to throw away food,” she said. “I'm a small business. I pay fees and taxes.” Mahn guesses between $2,000 and $3,000 worth of food was ruined, plus the revenue lost because she couldn't open for four days.

She hopes Federal Emergency Management Agency funding might be available to reimburse her employees for the hours they missed.

Gov. Beverly Perdue has requested a federal disaster declaration for seven North Carolina counties — the first step in getting FEMA money for the uninsured and under-insured. Pitt County is not among them.

North Carolina Emergency Management Spokeswoman Julia Jarema said it's not uncommon to include additional counties as damage assessments are completed. Early data in Pitt indicates 2,000 homes and businesses were damaged to varying degrees, with the cost estimates in Greenville alone totaling $6.6 million for private properties.

Homeowners whose utilities meters are physically damaged may face some unexpected costs if they want to keep the power running. Those issues are causing many of the scattered outages that remain in the city, GUC spokeswoman Sue Hatch said.

“If the meter base needs rewiring, customers are required to contact a licensed electrician to make repairs,” she said. “And a city or county inspection will be necessary before GUC can restore power.”
That applies to East Carolina University students Madison Keesling and Jillian Morrow. The equipment connecting their meter to the power lines is hanging off the side of their North Overlook Drive home, though it's still running.

Their power was turned on Monday night, but they were told it will be shut off again without an electrician's aid.

“It'll work, but it's not safe,” Morrow said, recapping what neighbors with a box in the same condition were told by GUC.

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Officials to close East Carolina for second day
The Associated Press
Monday, August 29, 2011

GREENVILLE, N.C. (AP) — Officials will keep East Carolina University closed for a second day to ensure those affected by Hurricane Irene have had sufficient time to recover and take care of their needs.

Spokeswoman Mary Schulken said Monday that fallen trees and limbs have been removed, parking lots have been cleared and minor repairs performed on campus buildings. She said officials were prepared to resume classes, but chose to remain closed on Tuesday to make sure the community has had time to recover and students have had a chance to take care of personal needs.

Most of the nearly two dozen students displaced from Greene residence hall by a break in a storm drain pipe have returned to their rooms. Five students have been relocated to other residence halls until repairs are complete.
East Carolina football coach Ruffin McNeill talks about the Pirates' upcoming game against South Carolina during a press conference Monday in the team meeting room at the Ward Sports Medicine Building. (Rhett Butler/The Daily Reflector)

McNeill offers proper perspective
By Nathan Summers
The Daily Reflector
Tuesday, August 30, 2011

Right down to his hurricane preparedness, Ruffin McNeill proved again on Monday his deep eastern North Carolina roots.

Although the highest-ranked opponent of the McNeill coaching era awaits the Pirates Saturday night when ECU clashes with No. 12 South Carolina in Charlotte, the second-year ECU head coach put things into an immediate eastern N.C. perspective at his first Monday press conference of the new football season.

South Carolina could wait, he said in the opening moments, speaking at length instead about the effects of Hurricane Irene, the many other storms to rock eastern N.C. over the years and the overwhelming response that usually comes from the ECU football team.

“It's a group facing adversity, and the group looks adversity square in the eye, hits it right in the jaw and says ‘bring it on,’’” McNeill said on Monday. “That's East Carolina to me.”

The second-year East Carolina head football coach watched one tree in his yard after another uprooted by Hurricane Irene last Saturday afternoon, and McNeill put his faith in his players and coaches to adhere to his curfew and stay out of the storm.

The team held out as long as possible before finally canceling Saturday's scheduled practice, but returned to work as planned Sunday night. The coach and his wife, Erlene, waited out the storm in their Greenville home.
“Erlene and I were on our own curfew,” McNeill said, describing watching the storm from his house and counting the number of trees he had toppling to the ground in his yard, admitting he became angry at the situation initially. “Erlene was a trooper during that time. She had everything set up for us.”

At some point during the storm, the coach got a text from a friend suggesting he watch a video of the 1999 ECU team that was displaced from Greenville by Hurricane Floyd but then responded by upsetting No. 9 Miami the following week. The video, which was later viewed by the entire ECU team and staff, served as an important reminder to the coach.

“I told our kids, ‘We've got a lot of people depending on us. When you get tired and you get frustrated when we get on you about going to class and practicing with all you've got, think about that,’” McNeill said.

Injuries

Sophomore wide receiver Justin Jones has not set an exact date yet to return from the knee injury he sustained during a team scrimmage two weekends ago, but McNeill said he is making progress.

Also set to miss the showdown against the Gamecocks due to injury are defensive back Desi Brown (doubtful, right shoulder), inside linebacker Kyle Tudor (doubtful, left knee), and offensive linemen Drew Gentry (out, left knee) and Mack Helms (out, concussion). Defensive end John Lattimore (knee) and defensive tackle Leroy Vick (knee) are both out for the season.

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The cost of hurricane-related repairs at East Carolina University could reach $1 million, according to a preliminary estimate from Vice Chancellor Rick Niswander.

"That includes everything we know of right now; that's what we think it will take to get everything back the way it was," said spokeswoman Mary Schulken, adding that the number could change.

Niswander also estimated at least 70 trees larger than 10 inches were blown over or so severely damaged that they needed to be removed.

The Irene repairs at ECU will be paid for from a combination of insurance and state and federal funding, Niswander said. The university will use money for repair and renovation that it gets from the state, not its reserves, to help pay for repairs.
Students will not be in class today as cleanup efforts are under way on campuses countywide in the aftermath of Hurricane Irene.

East Carolina University, Pitt Community College and Pitt County Schools are closed today as officials and workers deal with the fallen trees and water damage left by the Category 1 hurricane that stormed through the area Saturday. The roar of chain saws could be heard across the mall at ECU on Sunday as grounds personnel worked to break down and remove trunks and limbs.

“First and foremost, we're trying to make the campus safe for students,” grounds supervisor Jake Isenhour said.

Several PCC buildings sustained “significant roof damage,” and numerous trees were uprooted across campus, said Susan Nobles, PCC's vice president for institutional advancement.

Pitt County's 36 public schools reported mostly minor damage, according to public information officer Heather Mayo. Sixteen schools were without power on Sunday.

“We had trees down on several campuses and ceiling tile issues and leaks in almost all our buildings,” Mayo said. “The main thing is how quickly we can get to it to fix it.”
ECU spokeswoman Mary Schulken said the university’s closure is primarily because of the condition of the community and region — power lines down, trees down and on houses, and roadways that remain underwater.

“We have faculty and staff affected and a lot of students coming from areas that were hit very hard,” Schulken said. “Also, it will be wise for us to do our work unimpeded by cars in parking lots and take our time to make sure everything is safe rather than rushing to open.”

Across campus, trees were down on electrical boxes, cars and buildings, “so we took the most pressing first,” Isenhour said Sunday afternoon. “Now we're on the second wave, cutting up on the ones on the ground, getting them in piles, then we'll haul them off. We had to prioritize.”

Isenhour declined to give an estimate of the number of trees that fell. “There's so many I wouldn't know where to start,” he said. “The total campus was hit; we lost some everywhere. The bigger, older oaks tend to snap.”

Dance professor Dawn Clark was walking through campus Sunday afternoon for the first time since weathering the storm at her home Saturday.

“Honestly I'm not surprised by the old trees coming down, but it's heartbreaking,” Clark said. “The devastation of the old trees is really what strikes me.”

Clark said her office in Messick Hall and the dance studios were fine, but she was alarmed at “a real structural dip” in the ceiling tiles of the hallway.

“From the outside, the roof didn't looked breached, but we'll report it,” she said.

Bill McCartney, associate vice chancellor of campus living and dining services, was walking along 10th Street when he saw water ponding in front of Brewster classroom building and decided to take action. Noticing a stormwater drain was clogged, he stuck his hand in 6 inches of murky water and scooped out leaves and other debris.

“All it took was five minutes and a dirty hand to drain a lake,” McCartney said. “It needed to be done, and it made it safer for everyone.”

Several students were walking or biking around campus to survey the damage and taking photos.

“I think this is insane,” said freshman Dani Linehan, who stays in Fletcher Hall. “I'm from Virginia, and I've never seen anything like this.”

“I'm used to it, but this is crazy,” said freshman Hannah Garrell, originally from Wilmington. She said she has been through about five hurricanes.
April Modigliani-Estraella, 19, and her friend, Alicia Setzer, 18, who live in Cotten Hall, said they were worried. Modigliani-Estraella said she “was really nervous” and stayed in the student lounge.

“I was afraid a branch or bush would fly through the window, and we'd have to evacuate as well,” Setzer said. “I was scared.”

Some students were more nonchalant. Qaadir Hicks, 20, who lives in Scott Hall, said he stayed inside and did homework. And he observed his fellow students playing in the storm.

“People were actually outside using slip-and-slides and playing soccer,” he said. “They were actually having a good time.”

With Hurricane Irene on the heels of Tuesday's tremors from the 5.8 earthquake in Virginia, students were humorously dubbing this week's experience “a hurriquake.” It was quite a way to start the year, Linehan said. “Earthquake, hurricane — we went through it all the first week of college.”

K.J. Williams and Ginger Livingston contributed to this story. Contact Jackie Drake at jdrake@reflector.com or 252-329-9567.
Editorial: Our Views

Teachable moment

For colleges and universities across the nation, football kicks off this weekend. For UNC-Chapel Hill, sadly, football has been kicking around all year. The embarrassments - athletic and academic - keep coming, and now there's another.

On a campus where entanglements between pro sports agents and college football players triggered an NCAA investigation last year, it might seem self-evident that involving an agent in the "academic enterprise" - particularly to teach in a department in which many student-athletes take courses - would be dumb. Dangerous too, because even casual contacts between amateur athletes and sports agents are rigorously regulated by NCAA rules - the same sort of rules the university is accused of violating.

Yet even with all that all-too-recent history, Professor Julius Nyang'oro hired a registered sports agent to teach a summer course in the department he heads, African and Afro-American Studies.

In doing so, Nyang'oro, who hasn't made himself available for comment, showed poor judgment - unsurprising for a professor who has acted as a one-car demolition derby for the university's academic reputation.

Nyang'oro taught the class in which football player Michael McAdoo submitted a paper rife with plagiarism that wasn't caught at the time, and gave a B+ grade to another player, freshman Marvin Austin, in an upper-level course that Austin seemingly had no business in, based on his academic credentials.

Then, in signing agent Carl Carey Jr. to teach a month-long course this summer (Carey holds a Ph.D. in educational psychology), Nyang'oro put the athletics department in a tough spot. Officials there, once they learned of Carey's course, "quickly alerted" academic advisers to not recommend his class, according to reporting by The N&O's Dan Kane.

Clearly, they sensed potential danger. Too bad no one in Nyang'oro's department or in UNC's academic administration sensed the same, although, apparently, the dean who signed off on the short-term hire wasn't informed
of Carey's agent status. If Nyang'oro didn't make that clear, it was a whopping oversight.

Faculty members have generally supported Chancellor Holden Thorp's firing of football coach Butch Davis - a dismissal largely based on the threat his football program posed to UNC's reputation - but they have yet to take sufficient steps to renew standards and promote academic rigor. Ultimately, they police their own ranks. It's high time they did so, because not all the shortcomings are on UNC's sporting side.
As NC Cleans up, Tourism Fears Take Center Stage

By MITCH WEISS and TOM BREEN Associated Press

NAGS HEAD, N.C. August 30, 2011 (AP)

Even if Hurricane Irene had missed North Carolina completely, the damage it caused farther north would have still imperiled the last hurrah of summer on North Carolina beaches — and the millions of dollars at stake.

The storm that made landfall at Cape Lookout on Saturday and then steamed up the East Coast left behind hundreds of thousands without power and damage that's still being tallied, much of it in the mid-Atlantic and northeastern states that supply a huge percentage of the tourists who come to the Outer Banks and other North Carolina beaches each summer.

"If your house was damaged, you might not want to go on vacation right away to the Outer Banks," said James Kleckley, director of the Bureau of Business Research at East Carolina University and an expert on the region's tourism-driven economy. "That's going to have an impact."

And as Gov. Beverly Perdue and other officials offered assurance that the state's beaches are ready for Labor Day, there were signs along the coast that the hangover from Irene will persist for at least the next few days, ranging from mostly empty beaches to an advisory telling people on the Outer Banks to boil drinking water.

The heart of North Carolina's coastal tourism economy is the Outer Banks, which stretch from the Virginia state line to tiny Ocracoke Island. And the moneymaking pulse of the region is Dare County, which includes the towns of Kitty Hawk, Kill Devil Hills and Nags Head, where restaurants and shops line N.C. 158 from end to end and rental houses cluster along the beaches.

These beaches are North Carolina's top tourism destination, worth about $834 million in business last year. On Monday there were worrying signs that Irene may have hobbled hopes for a lucrative Labor Day.

At the Comfort Inn on the beach at Nags Head, the hotel's 105 rooms were booked solid for the week before the storm, said front desk manager Kelly Smith. But over the last 24 hours they received 150 cancellations for the coming week. She estimated that the hotel will only be about two-thirds full
over the traditionally busy Labor Day weekend, when rooms go for $160 a night.

Many of the cancellations are coming from northern states affected by Irene, she said.

"They're saying they're cancelling because their power is off and don't know when it's coming on," Smith said. "Or they're saying their power is off, they had some damage and they don't know if they can afford the vacation anymore."

Rental properties outnumber hotel rooms more than 2-to-1 in Dare County, and some owners in that sector were having the same woes as the Comfort Inn.

Mike Johnson received cancellations on two of his three rental properties, both from families in New Jersey who had planned to spend Labor Day on the beach.

"I lost a lot of business," he said. "We got very little damage compared to other homes. One family told me they were worried that things wouldn't be open, and asked about the condition of the beaches. I told them outside of Hatteras, everything really was open for business. The beaches are fine. But they were worried."

The beach communities faced another problem Monday when the water utility that serves the length of the Outer Banks issued a boil-water advisory, which Dare County spokeswoman Kathryn Bryan said was a precautionary measure prompted by extensive flooding.

Lee Nettles, managing director of the Outer Banks Visitors Bureau, said he hadn't known about the water advisory before emphasizing that the area reopening to tourists had 70 percent of the available rooms in the Outer Banks.

"It obviously isn't ideal. It isn't going to help us," Nettles said. "But I'm hopeful still that the word will get out that a lot of our businesses are open."

In coastal areas south of the Outer Banks, where tourism is also an economic mainstay, workers scrambled Monday to get hotels, restaurants and beaches ready for Labor Day.

In Emerald Isle, workers hauled off more than 150 barnacle-encrusted car tires that washed up from an offshore artificial reef during the storm. In nearby Atlantic Beach, the Sheraton hotel was closed to visitors as about 75
workers from a disaster restoration company labored to get it ready for the weekend rush.

Nearby at the Crab Shack restaurant, where the force of waves from Irene's sound-side surge slammed into the low-lying building, the plywood subfloor bowed up several inches off its joists. A black line marked the wall a foot high where water flooded the building.

Brothers Eric and Craig Guthrie tore out the carpet while they waited for an insurance adjuster to arrive. They said it was the sixth time the restaurant has flooded since their father opened the place 35 years ago.

"There was Bertha, Fran, the two after," said Craig Guthrie, struggling to remember all the storms that had flooded the business. "Then there was Ophelia. That one tore off the whole back dining room."

He predicted they would miss Labor Day, but they still planned to rebuild.

Reassuring tourists that the state's beaches are ready has been a priority of state and local officials even before the extent of the damage is fully known. Perdue, in her tours of areas affected by the storm, has stressed that the cleanup won't affect vacationers.

"We feel like the folks around the country understand our beaches are open and North Carolina is open for tourism," Perdue said in Rocky Mount on Monday.

But many of the beaches along the Outer Banks were practically deserted Monday. Hatteras Island remained accessible only by ferry because of damage to N.C. 12, the only road connecting it to the mainland.

Mandy Evans, 24, was one of the few people walking along the beach in Nags Head, looking for seashells. Like many Outer Banks residents, Evans depends on tourism: She works in a gift shop along N.C. 158, and was troubled to see so few people out on the sand.

"If the tourists don't come, we're in trouble," she said. "We have to get the word out that the beaches are fine. Come down."

The focus on making sure tourists feel comfortable may seem odd to anyone unfamiliar with the lopsided economy of the Outer Banks. Research by Kleckley shows that fully 50 percent of all jobs in the region are concentrated in three sectors: hotels and food service; retail, from grocery stores to souvenir stands; and real estate rentals and leases. By contrast, those three sectors account for just over 20 percent of overall jobs in North Carolina.
"The tourists are the lifeblood of most things there," he said. "They're really geared toward bringing that non-resident to the area and taking care of them."

Associated Press writers Michael Biesecker in Atlantic Beach, Gary D. Robertson in Rocky Mount and Emery Dalesio in Raleigh contributed to this story. Breen reported from Kill Devil Hills.
August 29, 2011

North Carolina Colleges Affected By Hurricane Irene

By Chris Justus

CHARLOTTE,NC--Governor Bev Perdue and other state leaders got a birds eye view of Irene's aftermath Monday. East Carolina University is one of the places dealing with damage. One Charlotte man spent the weekend worrying about the daughter he just dropped off at college.

"It's nothing I can control nothing I can do, it's nothing, the only thing I could do is pray about it and let God control the situation," said Joseph Alexander. He sat helpless in his East Charlotte home and watched as Hurricane Irene moved up the coast worrying about his daughter Keiosha at East Carolina University.

"I was telling him it wasn't that bad, but after we went outside I was like Dad this is horrible all this water flooded and everything," said Keiosha Alexander. Irene dumped more than a foot of rain on the campus, with winds over 70 miles per hour. "Everything was falling down it was flooded, we couldn't go places I got scared because I was like this is actually serious," said Keiosha Alexander.

Carlos Irias and his girlfriend Jelisa didn't take any chances, they left E.C.U. just before the storm arrived for shelter here in Charlotte. "We just wanted to make sure we were safe and I wanted to make sure she was out of harm's way," aid Irias.

The couple thinks a win at the school's first football game this weekend will be a huge moral boost. "I think so because E.C.U. football is everything, football is everything at East Carolina," said Irias.

The E.C.U. Pirates take on the University of South Carolina at Bank of America Stadium Saturday night. E.C.U. students tell us the football team's already back to practicing.
Campbell University raises more than $13M for medical school

BUIES CREEK, N.C. - In its effort to create a medical school to help address a rising shortage of physicians in North Carolina, particularly in rural counties and other poor communities, Campbell University has raised over $13 million in gifts and pledges in a campaign to raise $20 million.

With a price-tag of $60 million for a 21-acre medical-school campus that will house five buildings totaling 97,000 square feet, the university also has borrowed $30 million from its endowment, which now totals $139 million.

The medical school, with groundbreaking expected in 2012, will enroll 150 students in each class, for a total of 600 after four years, and will provide clinical training in partnership with hospitals and health systems in eastern North Carolina.

The school, which still must secure accreditation from the Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation, will be the fifth medical school in the state and the first since East Carolina University opened its medical school in Greenville in 1977.

"It can't come soon enough," Michael Nagowski, CEO of Cape Fear Valley Health System in Fayetteville, one of the new medical school's clinical partners, told a group of 80 people at a meeting Aug. 24 of the Campbell University Medical School Founders Board.

By the mid-2020s, he said, the U.S. will face a shortage of 125,000 physicians, with the most acute shortage expected among primary-care physicians.

"There is a demonstrated need for additional physicians and health-care professionals in North Carolina and across this nation," Jerry M. Wallace, Campbell's president, told the Founders Board group. "We are in an underserved area, and the shortage is becoming even more critical."

Dr. John M. Kauffman, the new school's dean, said North Carolina ranks 31st among the 50 states in physicians per capita, and 35th in primary-care physicians per capita, with 20 counties in the state lacking even a single general surgeon.
James O. Roberts, vice president for business and treasurer at Campbell, told the group the cost of the new medical school will be far below those of new medical schools at other universities because, rather than building a teaching hospital as those schools are doing, Campbell will be partnering with regional health systems to provide clinical training.

Those health systems include Cape Fear Valley Health System, Southeastern Regional Medical Center in Lumberton, WakeMed in Raleigh, Central Carolina Hospital in Sanford, Betsy Johnson Regional Hospital in Dunn, Johnston Medical Center in Smithfield, Sampson Regional Medical Center in Clinton, and New Hanover Regional Medical Center in Wilmington.

The focus of the new medical school will be osteopathic medicine, an alternative medical practice that prepares osteopathic practitioner to facilitate the process in which the body heals itself.

"We want to be the leading trainer of missionary physicians," said Kauffman.

He said the new med school, in supporting the mission of the Baptist university, will focus on "mind, body and spirit."

A study prepared in March by Michael L. Walden, an economist at N.C. State University, concluded the new school would have a total impact of nearly $300 million over its first 10 years of operation and first five years of graduates, with employment associated with the school peaking at over 1,100 jobs, including 100 jobs at the school itself.

The fundraising campaign has received a commitment of $3 million from the Harnett County Board of Commissioners.

Britt Davis, vice president for institutional advancement at Campbell, says the new medical school will open facilities for training for local emergency medical technicians in the county and for nursing students at Central Carolina Community College.

School officials announced at the meeting that Ed and Dinah Gore, whose family developed the Sunset Beach community on the North Carolina coast, will donate $2 million for the new medical school.

Campbell raised $10 million for a new facility it opened in 2007 for its pharmacy school, and $10 million for a new home it opened in Raleigh in September 2009 for its law school.

And in the school year that just started, the school has launched a master's degree program for physician assistants.