



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

To: News Media

From: Bamberg County Administration

Date: January 12, 2024

**Re: Bamberg Residents Should Report Storm Damage,
File Insurance Claims**

Bamberg, South Carolina (January 2024) – Bamberg County residents who experienced property damage due to Tuesday's storm should report the damage to county emergency services. As cleanup from Tuesday's storm continues, Bamberg County Emergency Services and the South Carolina Emergency Management Division are conducting damage assessments to determine if the impacts of the storm are eligible for federal disaster aid.

According to SCEMD, approximately 20-30 Bamberg businesses were damaged by the storm, with 10 being completely destroyed, including South Carolina Oak to Barrel, area restaurants, and storefronts. Furthermore, about 20 homes were affected, with one being destroyed. Several Bamberg County and City buildings were also damaged, including the historic Old City Hall (total loss), the Courthouse (roof), and City Hall (minor). Total numbers will be revised and updated as the damage assessments continue.

The majority of storm damage was concentrated in the downtown area (Highway 601 and 78 intersection), and once a structural integrity assessment (in progress) is completed, the SC Department of Transportation will coordinate debris clean-up and operations.

Additionally, residents should contact their insurance companies if they have not already done so. To avoid a duplication of benefits, ALL insurance must be accounted for before a determination of public, individual, or small business assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) or the Small Business Association (SBA) can be conducted.

SCEMD's Recovery and Mitigation Section Chief Emily Bentley provided the following guidelines for Bamberg residents with tornado property damage:

- Immediately contact your insurance company.
- **Report damage to Bamberg County Emergency Services at 803-245-3013.**
- Take **pictures** of storm-caused damage and keep **receipts** for clean-up-related purchases. Your documentation will help both your insurance claim and county damage assessments. Note: federal disaster recovery programs, if deemed eligible, focus on uninsured losses.

- Damage assessment is ongoing, which will determine federal assistance availability. If there is enough storm-caused damage to ask for federal assistance, the process of requesting and making it available can take weeks to months.
- **Call 2-1-1** to be connected to local **volunteer organizations** for clean-up assistance.

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For more information on this press release, email info@bambergcounty.sc.gov.