



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**To: News Media**  
**From: Bamberg County Administration**  
**Date: January 19, 2024**  
**Re: SCDOT, County, and City Begin Tornado Clean-up**

**Bamberg, South Carolina (January 2024)** – Nine days after a Category EF-2 tornado hit Bamberg, County Structural Engineer Mark W. Lorah gave the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) approval to begin the clean-up process on a portion of Highway 301 in Downtown Bamberg. However, damaged structures are still off-limits until engineers declare them safe. SCDOT brought in about eight dump trucks Thursday morning and made significant progress in the removal of debris and bricks from Highway 301, but the road and the affected downtown area will remain closed until damaged structures have been removed or repaired.

Furthermore, Bamberg City Council members and Mayor Nancy Foster held a special meeting Thursday night and voted to approve an Emergency Ordinance, “declaring that an emergency... affecting the life, health, safety, and/or property of the people of the City...exists with respect to damage caused by a storm on January 9, 2024 and authorizing appropriate action to be taken in connection with said emergency.” The ordinance took immediate effect after the vote.

Bamberg County Council has also called a special meeting to occur next Monday, January 22, to vote on a County emergency ordinance. County officials are also working diligently with the South Carolina Emergency Management Division (SCEMD) to determine if citizens with property damage caused by the storm will qualify for individual FEMA assistance. An update is forthcoming.

\*The majority of storm damage was concentrated in the downtown area. According to the 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 store fronts. 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.

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For more information on this press release, email [info@bambergcounty.sc.gov](mailto:info@bambergcounty.sc.gov).