SBOE Numbered Memo 2012-25

TO:      Directors of County Boards of Elections  
FROM:    Gary O. Bartlett, Executive Director  
DATE:    October 26, 2012  
RE:      Emergency Preparedness for Hurricane Sandy

Hurricane Sandy is expected to have some impact on the North Carolina coastal counties this weekend. Current forecasts indicate that this state may receive 1 to 4 inches of rain and wind gusts up to 50 miles per hour. As with any tropical storm, areas could also experience power outages, flash flooding and sporadic tornadoes. Each county’s EMC coordinator received a briefing at 9:00 am this morning and as Executive Director of the State Board of Elections, I have been invited to be a participant of the North Carolina State Emergency Response Team (SERT), and will take part in another briefing scheduled for 1:00 p.m. this afternoon. This will be the best source of weather-related emergency information. I will keep you updated as events merit.

This weekend, several counties will be conducting Saturday and Sunday one-stop voting. Pursuant to G.S. § 163-27.1, as the chief State election official, I have the authority to exercise emergency powers if it becomes necessary to disrupt the hours or operation of one-stop voting in any county. It is important that county boards contact me immediately if a situation unfolds that merits the exercise of these emergency powers. Directors are also directed to stay in contact with your county board members, local emergency officials, and media.

These are some additional directives and reminders:

- Think safety first.
- Refresh yourself on your county board’s emergency plan and the emergency plan for your county.
- If there are computer servers, or voting and election equipment located in any area that is prone to flooding, you should relocate these resources to higher ground or additional sites and make sure these resources are secured.
• All coastal counties should especially take special care to secure servers, voting and election equipment.
• Make sure the SEIMS backup drives are taken off site. Make sure the SEIMS server is not on the floor, near windows and basically protected from rain or wind. If there is going to be an issue where the office is closing, contact the SEIMS helpdesk and we will do an emergency backup to the backup drives before they are taken offsite.
• Have pre-printed one-stop applications or ATV forms available
• If any one-stop voting is disrupted by this hurricane, the county board of elections will need to weigh options of additional hours for voter participation.

Should you need to reach me or a staff member this weekend, please call (919) 208-0241 or the HelpDesk at (919) 715-1650.