In Bertha's Wake / It smells so bad in here. Even my clothes smell mildewed.

Storm update

WHATS CLOSED
North Topsail Beach is still closed and there is no word yet on when it may reopen.

Rye-pond students in New Hanover County will not start school today as scheduled. The first day of school has been postponed until at least Tuesday. Other summer programs for students — including summer school, driver education and summer preschool — are also canceled today. Surf City will report as usual.

WHATS OPEN

North Topsail Beach and Surf City are open to residents, property owners and businesses. You must provide proof of ownership or residency. On Sunday, July 15, residents will be able to enter the town for the first time. There will be signs around the area indicating directions. The town's beach access points will remain closed.

North Carolina Beaches are open only to residents and non-residents.

The Buncombe County beaches are open only to residents and non-residents.

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill will reopen today.

Cape Fear Community College was expected to reopen today.

CLEANUP

City of Wilmington residents report trash pickup has been delayed due to high winds. Residents are left with garbage piling up on the streets. Some residents have started to cleanup the streets themselves.

Reservoirs in the county are filled to capacity, and there is no indication of when they will be lowered. Residents are encouraged to conserve water and limit outdoor watering.

In Bertha's Wake

The Wilmington area, CP&L spokesman Kyle Hampton said. At the height of the storm Friday, about 8,000 homes and businesses lost electricity.

He said the company expected to have electricity restored to all but about 4,000 customers by Sunday night. The remainder should have power today.

Brunswick Electric Membership Corporation, expected to have power to almost all customers by 10 a.m. Sunday. A few customers in scattered areas might still be without electricity today, said Member Services Representative Philip McPherson. All but about 300 customers had power by 6 p.m. Sunday, he said.

Brunswick Electric Membership Corporation was trying to restore power to about 20,000 customers, half in the Burgaw area and half around New Hanover. About 700 CP&L customers and 7,500 with Joncs- Onslow Electrical Membership Corporation were without power.

Late Sunday afternoon, about 600 Wilmington customers were without phone service, Rollison officials said.

Water and sewer

Also Sunday, Wilmington and New Hanover County officials dealt with several sewage spills caused when power failed at pump stations.

We are trying to get generators out to some of the locations,” said County Engineer Wyatt Blanchard.

Sewage spills occurred in the Laurel Road, Fox Run Farms and Windward Oaks subdivisions, in areas off Greenvale Loop Road and at the New Hanover County airport. The system that monitors pump stations was last heard at the top of a communications tower at 10:15 a.m. Saturday.

A main sewage line at Wilmington’s treatment plant on North 13th Street also ruptured, spilling its contents into Smith Creek.

“Right now I couldn’t tell you for sure what amount went into the waterways,” Mr. Blanchard said. The county’s Health Department and state environmental officials have been notified and are investigating, he said.

Water and sewer problems in Carolina Beach that helped prompt town officials to delay allowing residents back on the island were apparently fixed by Saturday, said a spokesperson at the town’s Police Department.

Water service was restored to most areas in New Hanover County, but environmental health officials caution anyone who lost water or sewer access to boil water before drinking it until further notice. Water will be tested, and officials will notify residents through the media when they can stop taking precautions, Mr. Blanchard said.

Property damage was estimated at more than $40 million for Onslow County, not including Jacksonville’s total estimated today. Damage estimates for Carolina Beach were not available. Surf City in Pender County expect damage estimates today.

The storm also halted the first day of school for year-round students in New Hanover County schools and canceled other classes for today because of damage and delays. Classes could resume Tuesday.

Wilmington Drive Middle School sustained significant damage to its roof, said school system spokesman Danose Avery, brisk winds and leaking roofs were the most serious problems, he said. The school’s damage was estimated at less than $170,000.

It makes it even more urgent now because we have a lot of people staying here, and they don’t have any protection at all,” Mr. Medlin said.

Despite the severe damage, few injuries were reported. At least one person was transported to a hospital with minor injuries, and thousands of people were without power. The storm also caused widespread flooding, with some areas reaching more than 10 feet.

Relief help

Many of those stranded by the storm continued to get help from relief organizations Saturday.

The American Red Cross said Saturday that it had sheltered more than 6,500 people, and the Red Cross said it had opened up 55 shelters and served more than 27,700 meals.

So much help for storm victims poured in, one emergency official said, they didn’t know how to handle it.

Pender County officials said they’ve got their problems under control and don’t need any more relief workers. The local communities appreciate the help, and county emergency management coordinator Carson Smith, but they’re mostly focusing on protecting and sheltering the population.

Others apparently tried to take advantage of Bertha’s victims.

With power still out in many areas, Wilmington police seized two reports of stolen generators, worth a total of $25,900.

In Pender County, Mr. Smith said he received a report of at least one person called as a federal relief worker offering to clean up residents’ homes for $400.

Staff writer Chris DuVas and Dawn Althofen and correspondent M. Lee contributed to this report, which includes material from The Associated Press.