

N.C. DEATHS

At least 19 dead, many more still missing

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The confirmed death toll in North Carolina from Hurricane Floyd reached 19 on Saturday evening as floodwaters continued to hamper rescue efforts and forced additional evacuations across a wide swath of eastern North Carolina.

Another person was missing and presumed dead Saturday.

Adding to the region's misery, officials said it could be the middle of next week before floodwaters begin receding in some areas. Only then can officials get an accurate count of people who were caught in cars and houses as the waters rose.

In Pender County, surging floodwaters accounted for at least two confirmed deaths.

A Wilmington man was killed Thursday when his van was swept off westbound I-40 just south of the Duplin County line and submerged under 5 feet of water.

It wasn't until Friday afternoon that emergency crews were able to recover the body of Paul Buco of 323 Sabra Drive.

"The waters were just so dangerous on the afternoon it happened. We simply couldn't afford to put divers in there," said J.L. Giddeon, chief of Union Rescue in Willard.

Farther south, crews Friday recovered the body of William Nixon of Currie on Coras Grove Road near

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Staff photo MIKE KAMLEY

Hogs scramble to higher ground in Duplin County as floodwaters from Hurricane Floyd take over farmland. Hundreds of thousands of farm animals have perished in floodwaters in North Carolina.

Deaths

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Burgaw.

Pender County Rescue Chief Everett Baysden said Mr. Nixon was driving through deep water Thursday when his pickup flipped over.

Dorothy Cavanaugh, Duplin County emergency services director, said there were three bodies pulled

from cars in floodwaters in that county. Two bodies were found Saturday and another was found Friday.

One of the cars was found in the Wallace area.

"They went through the water, and it was just too swift and just carried them away," she said.

She said rescue workers were still trying to save people Saturday night. Water rescue officials reported 70 square miles of flooded area in Duplin. Ms. Cavanaugh urged driv-

ers not to try to drive through water. She said some rural roads in the county were caved in.

Also late Saturday, rescue crews recovered the body of the state Department of Transportation worker who was washed away in Jones County Thursday.

The worker had stopped to help a stranded motorist outside Trenton, Jones County, when he was overcome by the floodwater, said Sgt. Winstead of the N.C. Highway Pa-