

## UPDATE: Flooding, Evacuations, Roads Closed

Written by Steve Frank  
Monday, 06 May 2013 03:25

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It has been that dark and stormy night you've read about, with a storm that has trekked across the country, dragging havoc with it, hitting our area all day Sunday—and especially in the overnight hours. Sections of many roads are closed, some due to high water, others due to trees down, rock and mud slides, and there have been some evacuations. Avery county has been hit particularly hard, with the juggernaut of heavier rain knifing into the county in the early morning hours, bringing with it high winds. Avery called for all fire stations to be manned late last night, and those fire departments have run many calls overnight, not only dealing with flooding and other weather issues, but it seems more than a normal overnight of medical calls, as well.

At about 5:30 this morning, four firemen were trapped in one of the fire vehicles on Elk River Road returning from an emergency call. The truck was taking on water, and Linville Central was dispatched for a swift water rescue, but all personnel were able to get out and to land on their own after some struggling against the rushing water.

Road issues in Avery: Linville intersection traffic is being rerouted to Ruffin Street—impacting traffic into Cannon Memorial.

NC 184, which was closed overnight in Banner Elk—from the Best Western to Dobbins Road—is now back open, as of a few minutes after 8am. That road closing caused Banner Elk to be split almost in half, with traffic from the downtown side having to travel through Elk Park and Newland to reach the other side of town. On US 19E, Buck Hill Campground had to be evacuated, with campers taken across the road to the Green Valley Fire Department.

Properties along the Linville River were cut off from US 221 and NC 181 even before dark last night with the river across the low water bridges, and several homes in LandHarbor had be evacuated, with residents moved to facilities within the subdivision.

In Watauga, Boone PD report the Blowing Rock Road entrance to the Boone Mall is closed, and there is minor flooding on the roadway near the mall entrance. The rear entrance to the mall is open. Other Watauga roads that have been closed include Guy Ford Road, Hubert Thomas Road, several places along the Watauga River Road, Bamboo at the airport, Deerfield Road closed to State Farm Road from Bamboo, Laurel Creek Road on the US 321 end, Dewitt Barnett Road, and Aldridge Road. Boone Fire had to rescue a motorist trying to cross the Deerfield Road at the Golf Course at about 4:30 this morning, and on the Caldwell side of Blowing Rock, a rock and mud slide closed the south-bound lane of US 321. Highway 90 in northern Caldwell County is closed due to a landslide according to Caldwell County Emergency Management. The landslide is located  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile north of Collettsville Elementary School. Ken Teague, Caldwell County Assistant Emergency Management Coordinator, says that the North Carolina Department of Transportation is in route but it is expected to take a good part of the day to clear the landslide. There are two alternate routes residents can take. Mulberry Creek Road to Globe Mountain Road to where it joins Highway 90, or take Mulberry Creek Road north to Kirby Mountain Road to Highway 321 near Blowing Rock. Last night Old John's River Road was closed due to a bridge flooding. The second bridge from the intersection with Highway 90 is flooded. And, Wilsons Creek Road was partially closed due to road washing. The southbound lane is closed just above the "Lady on the Rock." Minor flooding continues in the general Wilson's Creek and John's River areas. No injuries have been reported.

Ashe escaped most of the overnight drama, with a few trees down across roadways their only issues—and they were handled quickly.

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