**PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**
September 11, 2018

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**Mayor Bowser Declares State of Emergency Ahead of Hurricane Florence**

*District Officials Monitoring Latest Developments of the Storm and Encourage Residents to Begin Preparing Now*

**(WASHINGTON, DC)** – As the District prepares for Hurricane Florence, Mayor Muriel Bowser has declared a state of emergency, effective immediately.

***“While we are monitoring potential impacts of Hurricane Florence on the District, we remain committed to keeping our residents safe, prepared, and informed,”*** said Mayor Bowser. ***“I encourage all District residents and visitors to take this storm seriously and stay up to date on the latest emergency information, including signing up for our AlertDC messaging service.”***

The declaration of public emergency is effective immediately and will stay in effect for 15 days. The declaration authorizes the City Administrator, in coordination with the Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice, the Director of the District of Columbia Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency (HSEMA), and the Chief Financial Officer, to apply for financial assistance through the Federal Emergency Management Agency, any other federal, private, or nonprofit disaster relief and recovery organizations, and any other appropriate agencies of the United States government.

The emergency declaration implements the District response plan and applies to all departments, agencies, and instrumentalities of the DC Government. It also permits utility workers and District agencies to retain crews to complete emergency repairs and restore services beyond normal work hours. The emergency declaration prohibits price gouging during the public emergency or for the next 30 days (whichever is shorter). The last time Mayor Bowser declared a state of emergency was on January 21, 2016, ahead of the winter storm known as Snowzilla.

HSEMA is coordinating preparations and emergency planning with its partner agencies at the District, federal, and regional levels.Additional information will be provided to the public as Hurricane Florence’s trajectory and its impact on the District become more precise.

Mayor Bowser advises that District residents and visitors should:

* **Sign up for alerts at**[**alertdc.dc.gov**](https://hsema.dc.gov/page/alertdc)**.**AlertDC is your personal connection to real-time updates and instructions to protect yourself, your loved ones, and your neighborhood.
* Encourage family and friends in the storm’s path to listen to officials and have a plan on how you will communicate once the storm passes.
* Replenish your emergency supply kit, especially if you have dietary or medical needs. For a list of items you need, visit[ready.dc.gov/kit](https://ready.dc.gov/page/build-emergency-kit).
* If you have access and/or functional needs, take steps to prepare in advance, including informing your support network of your emergency supplies and planning for your critical needs, such as transportation, power, and communications.
* Monitor local radio or TV stations for updated emergency information.
* Clean out your home’s gutters and empty out your rain barrels.
* Contact DC Water at (202) 612-3400 to report any clogged sewer basins and clean out any trash or litter around sewer basins.
* Follow HSEMA’s [Twitter](https://twitter.com/DC_HSEMA) and [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/HSEMADC/) for updated information from the District on potential impacts.

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**Social Media:**

Mayor Bowser Twitter:[@MayorBowser](http://www.twitter.com/mayorbowser)

Mayor Bowser Instagram:[@Mayor\_Bowser](http://www.instagram.com/mayor_bowser)

Mayor Bowser Snapchat: [@MayorBowser](https://www.snapchat.com/add/mayorbowser)

Mayor Bowser Facebook:[facebook.com/MayorMurielBowser](http://facebook.com/MayorMurielBowser)

Mayor Bowser Website:[mayor.dc.gov](http://mayor.dc.gov/)