

More Than 1,000 Prisoners Left Behind in Carolinas Hurricane Evacuation

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More than 1,000 inmates at several prisons across the Carolinas will not be moved during a mandatory evacuation of the states' coastlines ahead of Hurricane Florence, a Category 4 storm that is expected to make landfall Thursday.

"Right now, we're not in the process of moving inmates [at Ridgeland Correctional Institution]," South Carolina Department of Corrections spokesman Dexter Lee [told The State](#). "In the past, it's been safer to leave them there."

The facility holds 934 prisoners and 119 staff members, all of whom are expected to remain.

[Vice News reports](#) at least 650 inmates will be forced to ride out the storm at South Carolina MacDougall Correctional Facility, 80 miles north of Ridgeland Correctional Institution. Prisoners at J. Reuben Long Detention Center, on the coast near the North Carolina border, will also stay despite the evacuation order, according to [the Sun News](#).

"We're monitoring the situation," Lee told Vice. "Previously, it's been safer to stay in place with the inmates rather than move to another location."

Statewide evacuation plans have been formulated since Saturday.

"We know the ... order I'm issuing will be inconvenient," [South Carolina Gov. Henry McMaster said Monday](#). "But we're not going to gamble with the lives of the people of South Carolina. Not a one."

In North Carolina, Department of Public Safety spokesman [Jerry Higgins revealed](#) the state is moving people out of "fewer than 10" prisons. There are [55 such facilities](#) in the state.

As Hurricane Harvey raged last year, Texas inmates who were not evacuated [experienced a shortage](#) of food and water. Similarly, Hurricane Irma saw [nearly 4,500 prisoners](#) in Florida remaining in place. During 2005's Hurricane Katrina, [Human Rights Watch reported](#), in one building alone 600 prisoners were left in their cells for days as the prison flooded.

"They left us to die there," Dan Bright, an Orleans Parish Prison inmate, told Human Rights Watch.

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