

## Little impact expected locally from Hermine; 58,000 in Hampton Roads without power

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From staff reports

**UPDATE** at 6 a.m. Saturday: Tropical Storm Hermine was about 100 miles south of Norfolk tracking northeast along the North Carolina Outer Banks, as of 6 a.m. Saturday morning. The storm is expected to have little impact on Richmond, but it is already hammering Hampton Roads. More than 58,000 Virginia Dominion customers are without power in southeastern Virginia, according to the power company's online outage numbers.

Today's forecast in Richmond calls for rainfall mostly before 3 p.m., but meteorologists don't expect more than half of an inch of new precipitation. Skies will be cloudy, with a high near 77 and a north wind around 17 mph, with gusts as high as 30 mph. Tonight there is a slight chance of rain before 9 p.m. Little new accumulation is expected. Winds will subside blowing between 10 to 13 mph.

The main effects of Hermine are expected to be felt in the Hampton Roads regions. A National Weather Service advisory said the storm could dump 4 to 8 inches on the Tidewater through this evening. Wind gusts could reach 50 to 60 mph along the Chesapeake Bay. Gov. Terry McAuliffe has declared a state of emergency for all of Virginia as the state braces for the effects of the remnants of Hurricane Hermine, which made landfall on Thursday.

Hermine will most likely bypass Richmond with the coastal areas of Virginia, such as Hampton Roads, being the most affected Saturday afternoon, according to the National Weather Service. East of Interstate 95, Richmond is looking at up to an inch of rain and winds up to 40 mph. The rains and wind are expected to taper off closer to Charlottesville. Hampton Roads, Virginia Beach and the surrounding areas could see 4 to 6 inches of rain with gusts up to 60 mph. There is concern for severe flooding to occur in these areas, according to the National Weather Service. The largest impact from Hermine is expected to be Saturday afternoon, around 2 or 3 p.m.

"We are strongly encouraging everyone in SE Virginia to prepare for the possibility of damaging winds, downed trees, power outages and flooding in much of the commonwealth," McAuliffe said. "I have been briefed by the National Weather Service and my emergency team, who are tracking this storm and monitoring for the potential that it will reconstitute as a nor'easter with significant rainfall, life-threatening storm surge and flooding." McAuliffe urged Virginians to limit travel as the severe weather arrives "and evacuate if recommended by officials."

McAuliffe listed the following actions by the state, according to a news release:

- “The Virginia Emergency Operations Center is at increased readiness with emergency response team members monitoring the storm and ready to coordinate the state’s response. The Virginia Emergency Support Team will be fully activated tomorrow morning and will provide 24-hour coverage for as long as needed.
- The Virginia Department of Emergency Management is coordinating conference calls between the National Weather Service, state agencies and local governments.
- The Virginian National Guard has been authorized to bring up to 300 personnel on state active duty and planned to alert them on Friday. They are scheduled to be staged and ready for duty by early Saturday morning at key locations in the Hampton Roads area. Expected missions for the Guard include using Humvees and light/medium tactical trucks to provide transportation through high water as well as providing chain saw teams for debris reduction.
- Virginia Department of Transportation crews have begun full preparation for a significant weather event expected to impact the Commonwealth over the next few days. VDOT crews are ready to clear roads and ensure roads are safe for travel.
- With this being a holiday weekend, Virginia State Police already have an increased presence on highways across the Commonwealth to manage increased volumes of traffic, and to expedite response to crashes and disabled motorists. The Virginia State Police Swift Water Rescue Team is on stand-by.”

Hermine has also affected Amtrak services in and out of Virginia. Cancellations and alterations to routes are as follows:

- Saturday’s Silver Star train from New York to Miami has been canceled. The Auto Train line that runs from Lorton, to Sanford, Florida has also been canceled.
- The Northeast Regional trains from Newport News to Boston will start and stop in Richmond. The Northeast Regional train from New York City to Norfolk will also start and stop in Richmond.
- The Palmetto line between New York City and Savannah, Georgia will stop in Washington, D.C.
- Sunday’s Northeast Regional train that runs from Boston and Norfolk will start and stop in Richmond.

Riders are encouraged to check Amtrak’s website or call for the most up-to-date information.

Old Dominion and Norfolk State universities have postponed their football home openers until Sunday due to Hermine.

Old Dominion, which is hosting Hampton University, will play at 3:30 p.m. on Sunday. Norfolk State, which is hosting Elizabeth City State University, will play at 6 p.m.