

Goodwin declares State of Emergency in Charleston after devastating flooding

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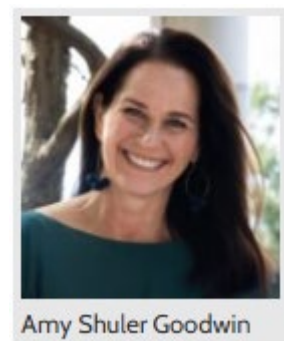
By [Jack Carlson](#)

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CHARLESTON, W.Va. — Mayor Amy Shuler Goodwin has declared of a State of Emergency in the Capital City, a day after devastating storms ripped through the area.

"When you're talking about this type of flooding, this is what comes top of mind, tip of tongue — 2003, 1960s; bad, bad floods," Goodwin said as she inspected damage along Garrison Avenue Monday. She joined the city's interim director of Homeland Security of Emergency Management, Chad Jones, to visit impacted areas throughout Charleston during the day and speak with impacted residents.



The State of Emergency declaration gives the city more freedom to move personnel, equipment, and resources in the storms' aftermath as cleanup efforts begin.

Along Garrison Avenue, a family flagpole at a residence was toppled by the floodwaters Sunday night; it had stood tall for over four decades. One home was knocked off its foundation and the chimney fell into the house. Pieces of asphalt were dislodged from the roadway and now lay in a nearby creek. A water rescue was made in a home by the Charleston Fire Department near Garrison Avenue as well.

Goodwin said the resilience of the community, in the aftermath of the storms, is striking.



Crews working to remove debris along Garrison Ave.
(Photo/Jack Carlson)

"We have amazing people in this community, and especially when we are in times of struggle," Goodwin said. "This is going to be a really long, hard slog, not just for these neighbors, but for so many across because some of this flood damage, you can't see."

Goodwin praised the city's Public Works Department for its response during the floodwaters. She said that supplies are of the utmost importance right now. The city has set up a supply hub at the Martin Luther King Center to collect much-needed items like gloves, bleach, hand sanitizer and more. Additionally, residents should keep track of what they've lost.

"We have to have folks document stuff," Goodwin said. "The most critical thing is document it, because if you are documenting things, then we can make sure that we can get folks into the system. So, there is a 123 survey. It's five simple questions. It's online."

Goodwin implored residents who have been affected to complete the damage survey online [here](#).

"The more residents who complete the survey, the more complete the picture of storm damage across Charleston will be," a release from the City of Charleston stated. "This information will help local and state emergency management teams assess the overall impact of the flooding and identify community needs."

The Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center has already become a cleanup supply hub. Goodwin encouraged residents who can help to drop off cleaning and recovery supplies to the center.

The city is currently looking for:

- Mops
- Bottled water
- 5-gallon buckets
- Disinfectant cleaner
- Flathead shovels
- Fans and dehumidifiers
- Heavy-duty trash bags
- Work gloves
- Paper towels

The Kanawha-Charleston Health Department will also be administering free tetanus and Hepatitis A vaccinations on Tuesday. There are clinics scheduled at the Interstate-77 underpass along Garrison Avenue from 10:30 a.m. until 1:30 p.m., and in Sugar Creek from 2:30 to 5:30 p.m., at the former Charleston Fire Station at the mouth of Sugar Creek Drive.

Charleston police report that the most-affected areas at Wertz Avenue, Garrison Avenue, Sugar Creek Drive, Scraggs Drive, Hanna Drive, Greenbrier Street, and Chandler Drive. Officers will provide additional patrols in those areas.

Families helping families is nothing new in West Virginia, Goodwin said.

"I've been doing this for 30 years, out in this world, and the thing that remains always consistent — this is neighborhoods all across the Mountain State, in all 55 counties — people rush to help," Goodwin said. "It's what we're good at doing."

Resident Dawn Ashworth donned gloves and went to work at her aunt's home on Monday. She watched the storm come in with her aunt while parked under the Interstate-77 underpass. As a city truck roared through the area, off to make a rescue, Ashworth said the speed of the truck initially threw her for a loop, then she quickly realized why — and had to move her car.

"I didn't know why, but when I got up to Crescent (Road) and I saw the water coming, I knew," Ashworth said. "And within 10 minutes of me moving my car back, the whole underpass was flooded, and water was still coming out towards Bigley Avenue."

Ashworth teared up when discussing the community along Garrison Avenue. She said everyone cares for one another.

"We check on each other," Ashworth said. "There's a lot of people up here that are hard workers, and everything that they have, they've worked hard for. It's really devastating to see a lot of people's homes lost, their vehicles; just everything."

Several power lines were down on Garrison Avenue as well. Ashworth said the Charleston police and fire departments showed tremendous bravery, running into the danger. She noted that a couple officers walked all the way up to Rockaway Road without hesitation.

"It means a lot to me, because I personally know a lot of those guys, and they're great guys," Ashworth said. "That's a side of our first responders and officers that a lot of people don't see."

Ashworth has heard from community members that one home's new porch was damaged by the rainfall. A new truck, without even 400 miles on it yet, was carried by the floodwaters as well, Ashworth reported.

Ashworth said that there's a great need for help and anything is appreciated.

"Obviously, we need cleaning supplies, and I know they're doing a donation for the Martin Luther King Center," Ashworth said. "But if people know of anybody that needs supplies, donate directly to them, that would be very helpful or through a church organization."



An American flag with mud stains now hangs on a porch; the flagpole was knocked over Sunday night. (Photo/Jack Carlson)