

October 4, 2024

Key Takeaways

- Tropical cyclone Helene hit the Commonwealth as a tropical storm, causing extensive damage in Southwest Virginia. A major disaster was declared in Virginia.
- Longshoremen returned to work early Friday, ending a strike that began Tuesday.
- Damage to an IV solutions manufacturing plant may impact medical supply chains, though the immediate impact is limited.
- Rwanda reported an outbreak of Marburg virus disease. The WHO estimates the risk of global spread to be 'low'.
- The majority of new HPAI A(H5N1) detections in dairy cattle have been in California. H5-type virus has also been detected in the state's wastewater.
- Clade Ib mpox continues to spread in DR Congo and Burundi.

Key Figures

Federal Disaster Declaration, Designated Areas as of 10/03/2024

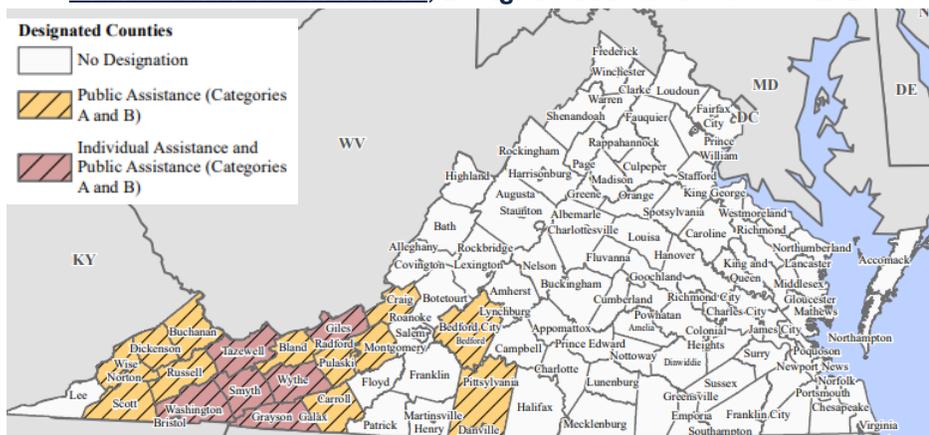


Image source: [FEMA](#).

Virginia Power Outages as of Oct 4, 2024 at 1:31 PM

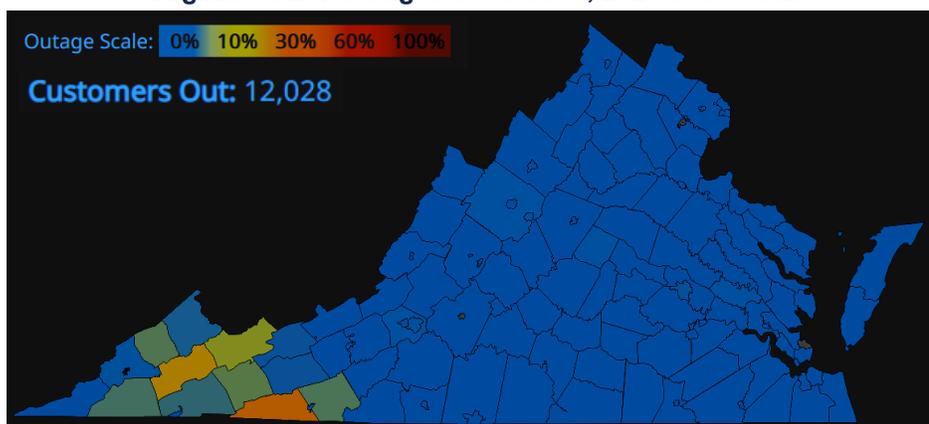


Image Source: [PowerOutage.us](#).

Helene

707,613

The number of US customers without power as of 1:21 PM, Oct 4, 2024.

Mpox

3

The number of clade Ib mpox cases reported outside of Africa as of Oct 4, 2024.

COVID-19

3%

The likelihood that COVID-19 activity is growing in Virginia, according to CDC models as of Oct 1, 2024.

HPAI A(H5N1)

255

HPAI A(H5N1) detections in dairy cattle herds in the United States as of Oct 3.

Spotlight:
Tropical Cyclone
Helene

Ongoing Monitored Situations

Marburg Virus

- **Rwanda reports outbreak of Marburg virus.** The Africa CDC reports 26 confirmed cases and six deaths across six of Rwanda's 30 districts. At least 70% of infections are among healthcare workers. The WHO rates the risk of spread as "high at the regional level, and low at the global level."
- **CDC releases Marburg Health Advisory.** The agency notes that no cases of Marburg have been detected outside of Rwanda, but offers guidance for healthcare workers.

Avian Influenza A(H5N1)

- **Outbreak continuing in California dairy cattle.** California is responsible for 52 of the 55 national detections of HPAI A(H5N1) in dairy herds in the last 30 days. The remaining three infected herds were from Idaho. Wastewater data corroborate this finding, as H5-type viruses were only detected in California and Idaho in the last month.
- **Investigation into Missouri case ongoing.** The case was first reported in early September. The patient potentially exposed 94 healthcare workers to the virus, and of these, six reported developing mild respiratory symptoms. In their latest update, the CDC noted one of the six has tested negative for HPAI A(H5N1) and that serology testing is still pending for several others.

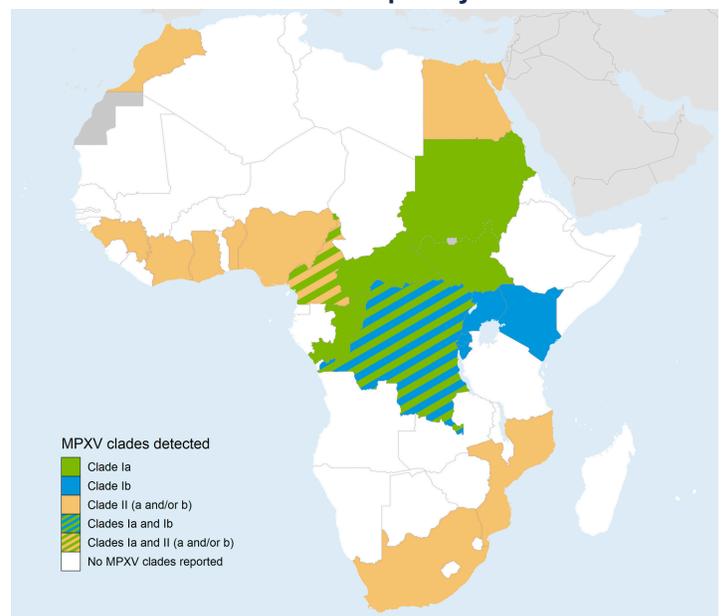
Seasonal Respiratory Illness

- **COVID-19 in decline regionally and nationally.** In the last week, emergency department (ED) diagnoses have fallen by 30% in Virginia and 26% nationally. Rates have steadily fallen in Virginia since the end of August and are now considered 'low'. Flu and RSV rates remain near zero.
- **XEC variant growing nationally.** The variant now accounts for six percent of new COVID-19 cases nationally, up from just 2.5% a week earlier.
- **Enterovirus D68 declining but still elevated.** Data from WastewaterSCAN show that EVD68 activity peaked in the American South in early September and has since declined by about 30%. Overall activity is still considered 'moderate'.

Mpox

- **Clade Ib mpox cases grow in Congo Basin.** Continuing the recent trend, Burundi and DR Congo represent the majority of new clade Ib mpox cases. The total suspected case count has also doubled in Uganda, but the Africa CDC notes this is likely due to backlogged results from prior weeks. Most cases in Uganda are also clade Ib. Physicians in eastern DR Congo suggest that sexual contact accounts for 80% of new cases.
- **Kinshasa outbreak continues.** Affected by both clade Ia and Ib mpox, the capital of DR Congo has reported over 600 cases since July. Officials worry that the outbreak will be difficult to contain in a city of 17 million.

Distribution of Mpox by Clade

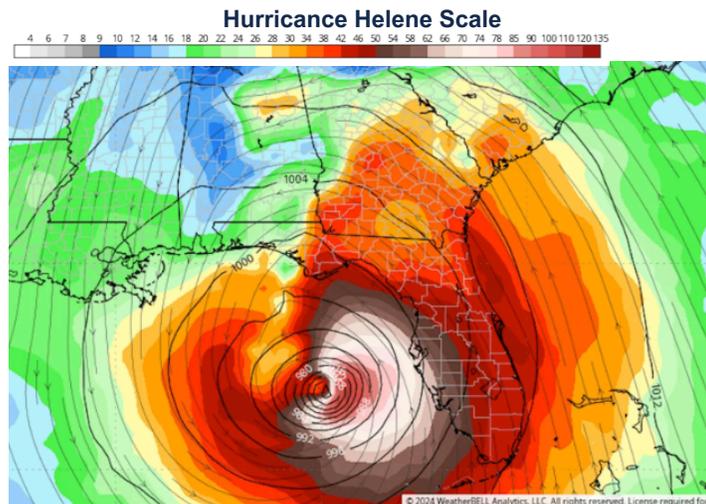


Clade Ib mpox remains primarily contained in the nations of Burundi, DR Congo, and Uganda. Image source: WHO.

Measles

- **Low MMR vaccination rates may be driving Minnesota outbreak.** The ongoing outbreak has reached 52 cases. While 93% of Minnesotan K-12 students received the full course of MMR a decade ago, this rate has fallen to 75% for kindergarten students in Minneapolis public schools. National rates have fallen to 92.7%, just short of the roughly 95% needed to prevent community transmission.

Spotlight



Helene was identified as a potential tropical cyclone on Sept 23. Three days later it struck Florida as a Cat 4 Hurricane. The next day heavy rain and severe wind caused extensive damage in Southwest Virginia. Helene was also one of the largest Gulf Coast storms on record, with tropical storm winds stretching over a 420 mile range. The speed and size of the storm caught many off guard, but such storms may be seen more frequently in the future. Image Source: Axios.

Tropical Cyclone Helene

- **Tropical Cyclone Helene caused extensive damage from Florida to Virginia.** Florida's Gulf Coast experienced record storm surge. Georgia, both of the Carolinas, Tennessee and Virginia experienced heavy rain, severe winds, landslides, tornados and historic flooding. At least 200 deaths have been reported, with more expected as officials search wreckage and reach areas cut off due to damage.
- **A major disaster was declared in Virginia,** extending federal assistance to 24 localities. Southwest Virginia experienced major flooding, two tornados and two deaths. Boil water advisories were issued in several localities, with some expected to last for weeks, while VDH urged people to avoid natural bodies of water.
- **Virginia's first responders made more than 70 rescues,** while two VSP helicopter crews rescued patients from the rooftop of Unicoi County Hospital in Tennessee. At least three regional Ballard Health hospitals in Tennessee closed, including Unicoi.
- **A major IV and dialysis solution manufacturing plant closed due to flooding.** Baxter International's North Cove, NC facility supplies 60% of IV solutions domestically. Road and bridge damage are hampering efforts to reopen the plant. The FDA has not declared any shortages and is working with Baxter to distribute remaining capacity and identify alternative suppliers.

Other News

- **A spike in school threats has forced some schools to increase police presence** or close entirely. Nationwide, over 700 students, including five in Virginia, have been arrested for similar threats since the fatal shooting in Georgia last month.
- **A chemical plant fire north of Atlanta prompted a shelter-in-place order affecting about 90,000 residents.** An evacuation order affected about 17,000 residents. A plume continues to rise from the plant, with smoke and a chlorine smell shifting with the wind. Officials claim chemical levels are currently safe, and all orders have been lifted.
- **Contents found in Saint Paul's College science laboratory prompt a multi-agency response.** The Lawrenceville college closed in 2013. Officials have secured the building and are developing plans to remove the contents.
- **The dockworkers' strike has been suspended until January 15 to allow additional time to negotiate a new contract.** The union and US Maritime Alliance came to a tentative agreement on wages and work is expected to resume immediately.
- **Recent point-in-time (PIT) counts show the homeless population increasing.** In both the Richmond and Roanoke Valley regions, the July 2024 PIT count is the highest it has been in recent years. Family-related issues and unemployment were the most commonly cited reasons for homelessness.