

# The ARC serving the Blue Ridge Piedmont of North Carolina

Southeast and Caribbean Division · North Carolina Region  
NC · 12 counties · HQ Hickory, NC · FEMA Region IV

968,843

People

392,663

Households

44.6%

Households below the ALICE survival threshold

12

Counties · 4,788 sq mi

Nearly **45% of households** across this chapter live below the ALICE survival threshold — the working families one disaster away from crisis.

**In this report** · Economic vulnerability · Who lives here · Home fire mission (FLARE) · mission delivery & the bespoke relationship strategy to follow

Sources: American Red Cross geography + 2023 demographics reference table; United Way ALICE + poverty (latest county year).

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Bespoke chapter intelligence — every figure traces to a named source.

# The chapter's footprint.

**12**

Counties

**4,788**

Square miles

**968,843**

People

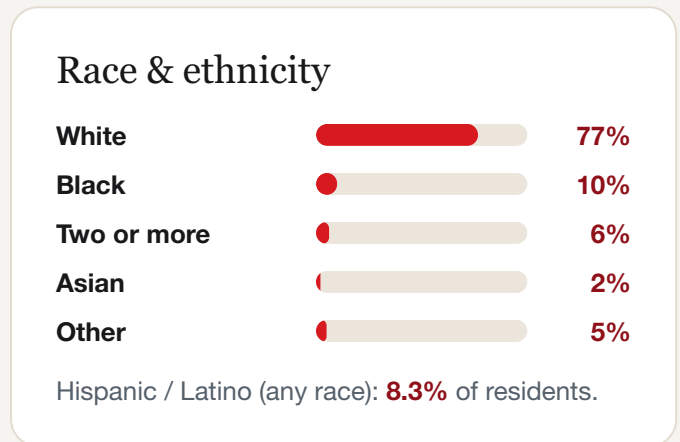
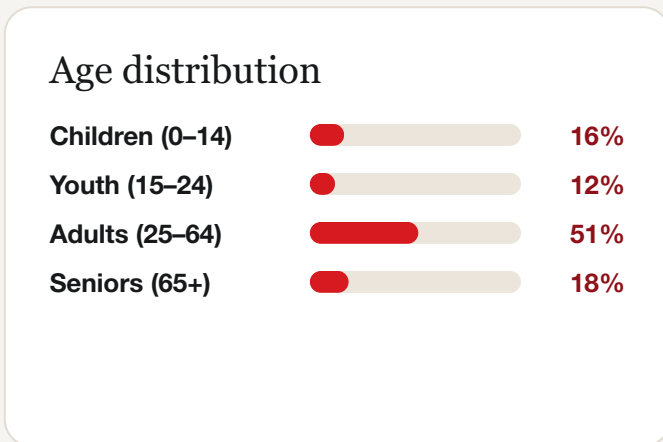
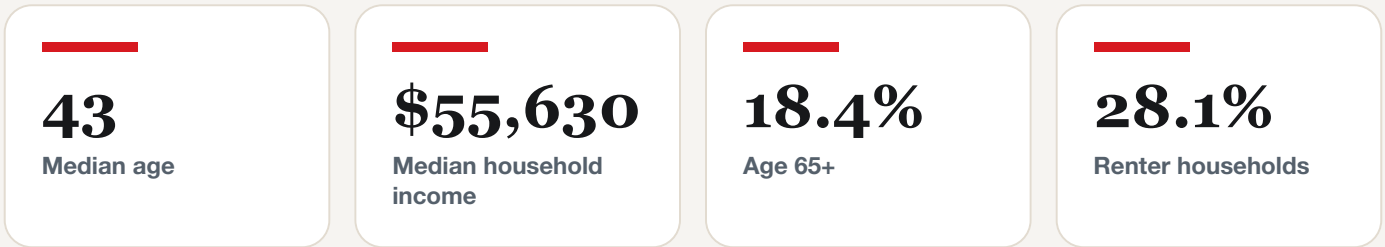
**North Carolina  
Region**

Southeast and  
Caribbean Division

COUNTY	PEOPLE	SQ MI	% OF CHAPTER
<b>Gaston</b>	235,996	364	24.4%
<b>Catawba</b>	163,189	413	16.8%
<b>Cleveland</b>	100,558	468	10.4%
<b>Lincoln</b>	90,859	307	9.4%
<b>Burke</b>	86,831	515	9.0%
<b>Caldwell</b>	80,025	474	8.3%
<b>Wilkes</b>	65,116	757	6.7%
<b>Watauga</b>	54,684	313	5.6%
<b>Alexander</b>	36,241	264	3.7%
<b>Ashe</b>	26,500	429	2.7%
<b>Avery</b>	17,750	247	1.8%
<b>Alleghany</b>	11,094	237	1.1%

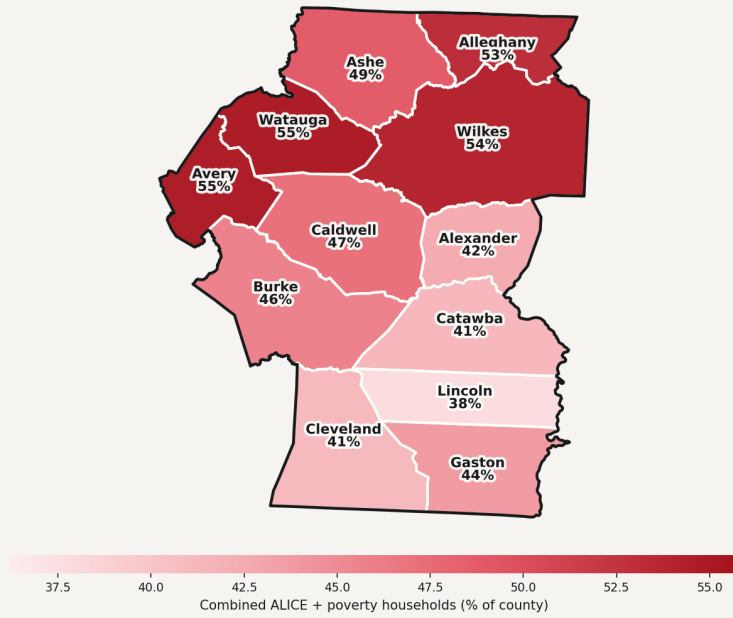
HQ: Hickory, NC · FEMA Region IV. Counties sorted by population.

# The people of this chapter.



Source: American Red Cross 2023 demographics reference table. Chapter figures aggregate the 12 counties; median age and income are population-weighted.

# Where the need is greatest.



COUNTY	PEOPLE	MEDIAN HH INCOME	ALICE	POVERTY	COMBINED
<b>Watauga</b>	54,684	\$51,025	30.0%	24.7%	54.7%
<b>Avery</b>	17,750	\$49,378	43.1%	11.5%	54.6%
<b>Wilkes</b>	65,116	\$45,142	35.7%	18.2%	53.9%
<b>Alleghany</b>	11,094	\$40,528	38.4%	14.6%	53.1%
<b>Ashe</b>	26,500	\$44,247	32.5%	16.2%	48.7%
<b>Caldwell</b>	80,025	\$42,901	34.0%	13.2%	47.1%
<b>Burke</b>	86,831	\$54,588	28.8%	16.8%	45.7%
<b>Gaston</b>	235,996	\$57,064	30.4%	13.3%	43.7%
<b>Alexander</b>	36,241	\$57,632	31.3%	11.0%	42.4%
<b>Catawba</b>	163,189	\$61,049	28.9%	12.4%	41.3%
<b>Cleveland</b>	100,558	\$49,405	24.1%	17.0%	41.1%
<b>Lincoln</b>	90,859	\$77,140	27.2%	10.5%	37.7%

Combined = households in poverty plus ALICE households (above poverty, below the cost of basics), as a share of all county households. Source: United Way ALICE, latest county year.

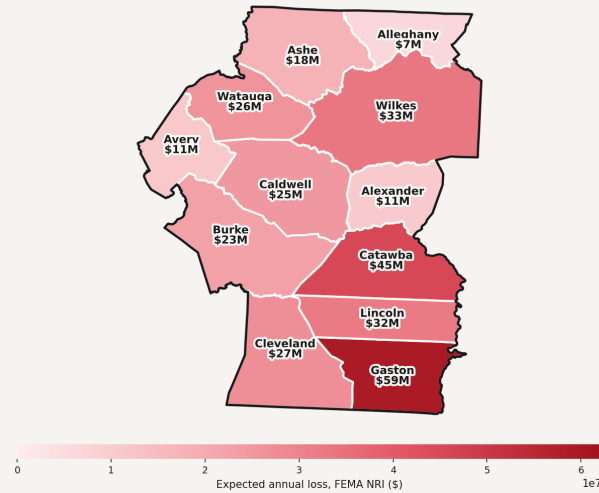
# What this chapter is up against.

**\$317.4M**  
Expected annual loss, all hazards

**Gaston**  
Highest-risk county

**60.6%**  
Avg social vulnerability (SVI)

**5**  
FEMA declarations, 5 yr (top county)



COUNTY	NRI RISK	EXP. ANNUAL LOSS	SVI %ILE	FEMA 5YR	FEMA ALL
<b>Gaston</b>	Relatively Moderate	\$59.3M	65.0%	4	20
<b>Catawba</b>	Relatively Low	\$45.4M	68.2%	4	21
<b>Wilkes</b>	Relatively Moderate	\$33.1M	70.7%	5	22
<b>Lincoln</b>	Relatively Low	\$32.2M	25.2%	4	21
<b>Cleveland</b>	Relatively Low	\$27.3M	85.2%	4	20
<b>Watauga</b>	Relatively Low	\$26.0M	42.4%	5	24
<b>Caldwell</b>	Relatively Low	\$25.0M	65.0%	4	23
<b>Burke</b>	Relatively Low	\$22.8M	70.8%	4	24
<b>Ashe</b>	Relatively Low	\$17.8M	45.2%	5	26
<b>Avery</b>	Relatively Low	\$11.3M	71.9%	5	22
<b>Alexander</b>	Relatively Low	\$10.6M	45.6%	4	19
<b>Alleghany</b>	Very Low	\$6.6M	71.7%	5	20

Sources: FEMA National Risk Index 2025 (risk rating, expected annual loss), CDC/ATSDR SVI 2022 (social-vulnerability percentile), FEMA disaster declarations — via the Red Cross national county database.

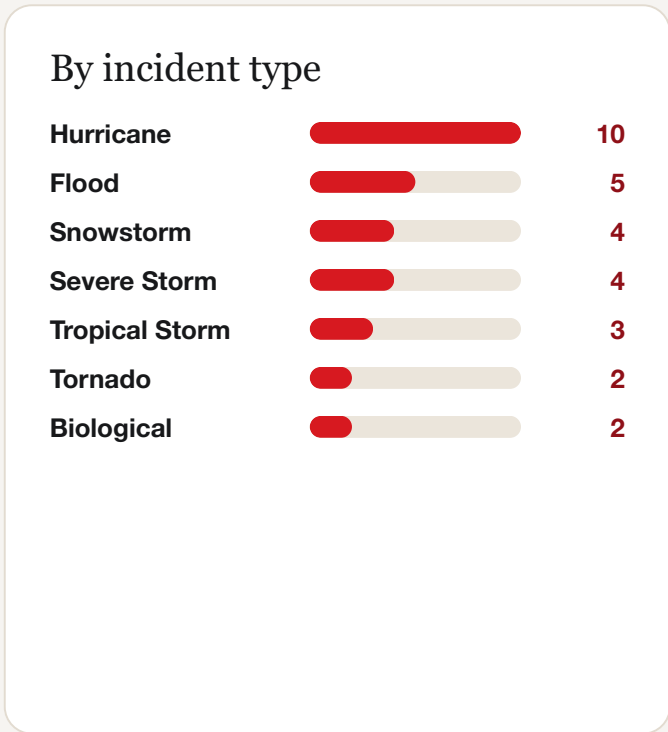
# A chapter shaped by disaster.

**34**  
Federal disaster declarations

**10**  
Hurricanes

**Hurricane**  
Most common type

**2026**  
Most recent

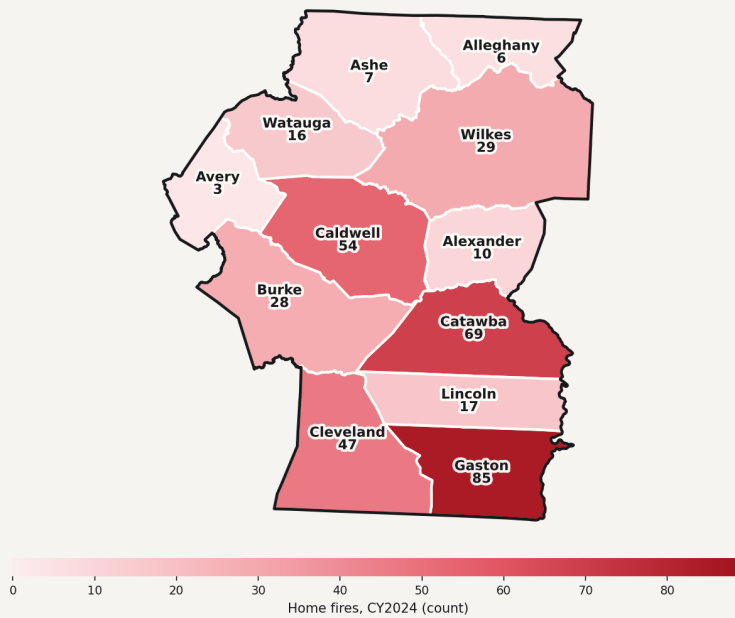
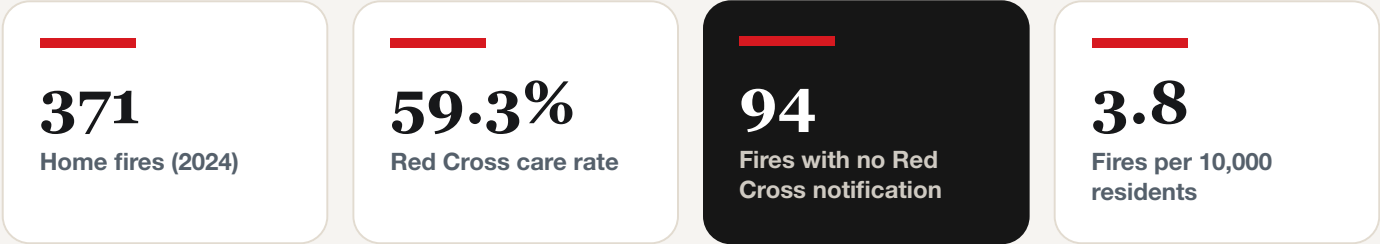


### Most recent declarations

FY	DISASTER	TYPE
2026	Severe Winter Storm	Winter Storm
2024	Tropical Storm Helene	Tropical Storm
2024	Hurricane Helene	Tropical Storm
2024	Tropical Storm Debby	Tropical Storm
2023	Hurricane Ian	Hurricane
2021	Remnants Of Tropical Storm Fred	Hurricane
2021	Tropical Storm Eta	Severe Storm
2020	Hurricane Isaias	Hurricane
2020	Severe Storms, Tornadoes, And Flooding	Severe Storm
2020	Covid-19 Pandemic	Biological

Source: FEMA Disaster Declarations Summaries v2 — county-level, deduplicated to unique disasters.

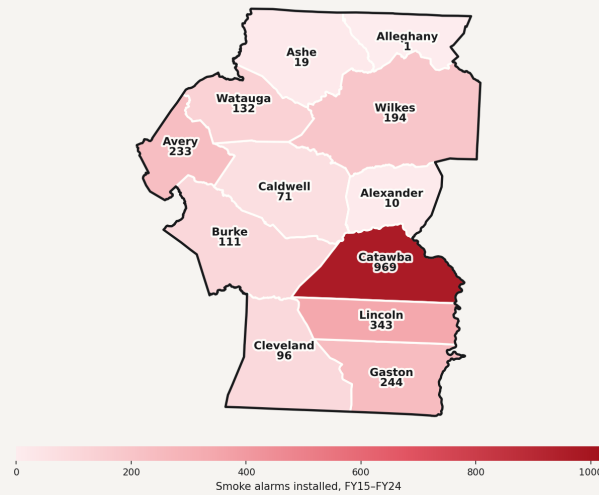
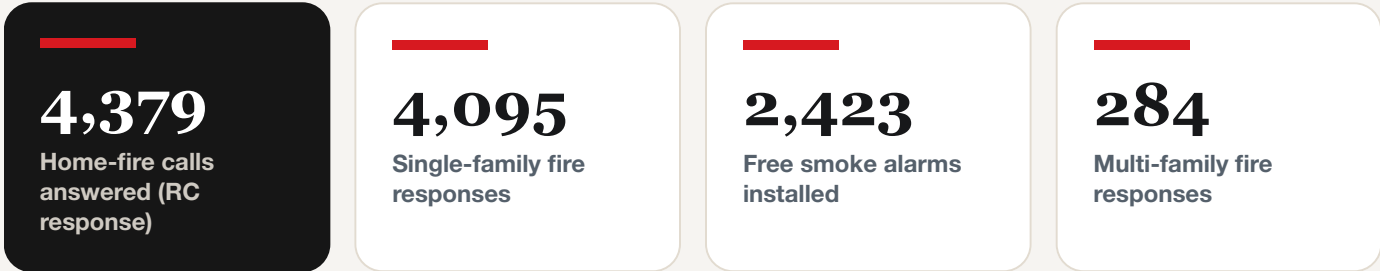
# Every home fire is a Red Cross moment.



Red Cross cared for **59%** of home fires — but **94 (25%)** happened with no Red Cross notification: the prevention, smoke-alarm, and response opportunity, county by county.

Source: FLARE Fire Incidents 2024 (American Red Cross, public layer). "With care" = Red Cross provided assistance; "no notification" = the Red Cross was never alerted to the fire.

# Red Cross shows up — and prevents.



Red Cross answered **4,379** home-fire calls and installed **2,423** free smoke alarms across the chapter — response and prevention, county by county.

Sources: DRO National 800-RedCross Calls by County (RC fire responses); Smoke Alarm Installs FY15-FY24 (American Red Cross).

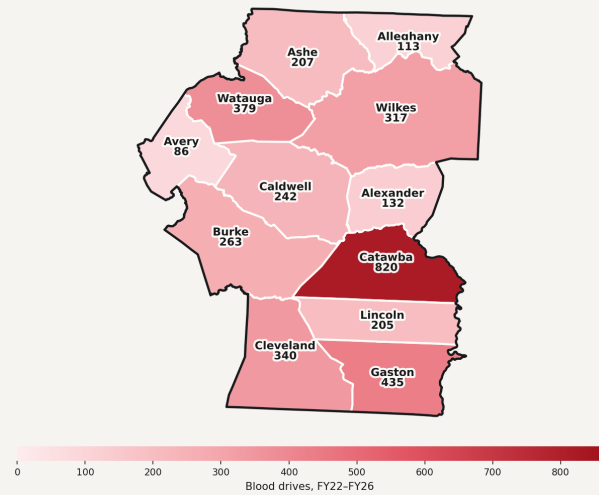
# The blood mission's local footprint.

**86,990**  
Blood units collected  
(FY22–26)

**3,539**  
Blood drives held

**650**  
Drives in FY2026

**12**  
Counties with drives



Blood drives are active in **12 of the chapter's 12 counties** — every county without one is an employer or civic opening: a host site, a sponsored drive, a standing partnership.

Source: BioMed Collections FY22–FY26 (American Red Cross). Drives = collection events; units = products collected.

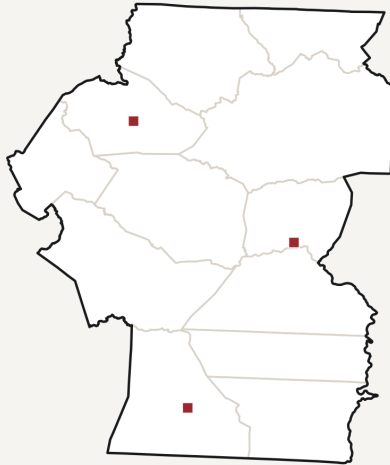
# The chapter's physical footprint.

**3**  
Red Cross facilities

**0**  
Owned

**3**  
Leased / licensed

**0**  
BioMed sites



**By type / function**

Partner / indirect site | **3**

**BioMed facilities**

No BioMed fixed sites in this chapter.

Sources: Red Cross real-estate portfolio (reintel.jbf.com) + BioMed facilities (biomed.jbf.com). Locations, types and functions only — no cost, square footage, or lease terms are disclosed.

# Who gives here.

Major-donor giving across the chapter — three fiscal years. Internal planning data.

\$594,080

Total giving, 3-year

39

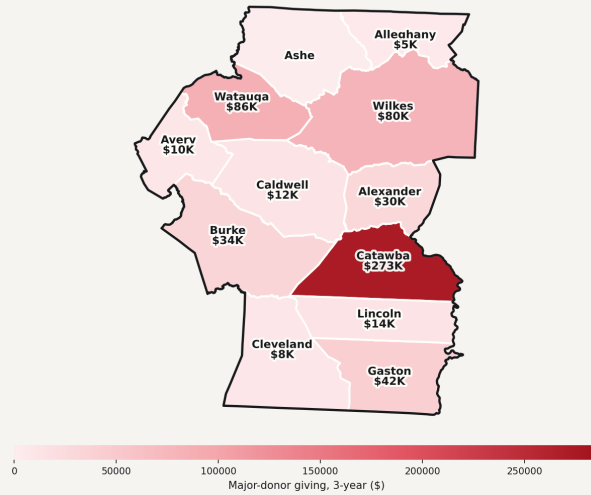
Major donors

\$24,492

Current FY · ▼ 94%  
vs prior FY

\$272,839

Top: Catawba



COUNTY	MAJOR DONORS	TOTAL GIVING, 3-YEAR
<b>Catawba</b>	14	\$272,839
<b>Watauga</b>	6	\$85,611
<b>Wilkes</b>	4	\$80,493
<b>Gaston</b>	5	\$42,136
<b>Burke</b>	3	\$33,500
<b>Alexander</b>	1	\$30,000
<b>Lincoln</b>	2	\$14,000
<b>Caldwell</b>	1	\$12,500
<b>Avery</b>	1	\$10,000
<b>Cleveland</b>	1	\$8,000
<b>Alleghany</b>	1	\$5,000

Source: Red Cross major-donor giving by county, three fiscal years. Internal / executive-director planning use — not donor-facing.

# Gaston County



**235,996**  
People

**\$57,064**  
Median HH income

**43.7%**  
Combined ALICE + poverty

**Relatively Moderate**  
FEMA NRI risk

### People & economy

Children (0-14)		18%
Seniors (65+)		17%
Median age		41.6
ALICE households		29,567
Poverty households		12,966

### Risk & response

Expected annual loss	\$59.3M
Social vulnerability (SVI)	65.0%
FEMA declarations (all time)	20
Home fires, CY2024	85
Fires, no RC notification	34
Bridge assistance · DRO 220-25	—
Major-donor giving · 3-yr	\$42,136

Gaston County · sources: Red Cross demographics 2023, United Way ALICE, FEMA NRI & declarations, FLARE CY2024.

# Catawba County



**163,189**  
People

**\$61,049**  
Median HH income

**41.3%**  
Combined ALICE + poverty

**Relatively Low**  
FEMA NRI risk

### People & economy

Children (0-14)		17%
Seniors (65+)		18%
Median age		42.5
ALICE households		19,662
Poverty households		8,464

### Risk & response

Expected annual loss	\$45.4M
Social vulnerability (SVI)	68.2%
FEMA declarations (all time)	21
Home fires, CY2024	69
Fires, no RC notification	16
Bridge assistance · DRO 220-25	—
Major-donor giving · 3-yr	\$272,839

Catawba County · sources: Red Cross demographics 2023, United Way ALICE, FEMA NRI & declarations, FLARE CY2024.

# Cleveland County



**100,558**  
People

**\$49,405**  
Median HH income

**41.1%**  
Combined ALICE + poverty

**Relatively Low**  
FEMA NRI risk

### People & economy

Children (0-14)		17%
Seniors (65+)		19%
Median age		43.1
ALICE households		9,492
Poverty households		6,682

### Risk & response

Expected annual loss	\$27.3M
Social vulnerability (SVI)	85.2%
FEMA declarations (all time)	20
Home fires, CY2024	47
Fires, no RC notification	10
Bridge assistance · DRO 220-25	—
Major-donor giving · 3-yr	\$8,000

Cleveland County · sources: Red Cross demographics 2023, United Way ALICE, FEMA NRI & declarations, FLARE CY2024.

# Lincoln County



**90,859**  
People

**\$77,140**  
Median HH income

**37.7%**  
Combined ALICE + poverty

**Relatively Low**  
FEMA NRI risk

### People & economy

Children (0-14)		17%
Seniors (65+)		18%
Median age		43.4
ALICE households		9,699
Poverty households		3,741

### Risk & response

Expected annual loss	\$32.2M
Social vulnerability (SVI)	25.2%
FEMA declarations (all time)	21
Home fires, CY2024	17
Fires, no RC notification	4
Bridge assistance · DRO 220-25	—
Major-donor giving · 3-yr	\$14,000

Lincoln County · sources: Red Cross demographics 2023, United Way ALICE, FEMA NRI & declarations, FLARE CY2024.

# Burke County



**86,831**  
People

**\$54,588**  
Median HH income

**45.7%**  
Combined ALICE + poverty

**Relatively Low**  
FEMA NRI risk

### People & economy

Children (0-14)		16%
Seniors (65+)		20%
Median age		44.5
ALICE households		10,811
Poverty households		6,312

### Risk & response

Expected annual loss	\$22.8M
Social vulnerability (SVI)	70.8%
FEMA declarations (all time)	24
Home fires, CY2024	28
Fires, no RC notification	7
Bridge assistance · DRO 220-25	—
Major-donor giving · 3-yr	\$33,500

Burke County · sources: Red Cross demographics 2023, United Way ALICE, FEMA NRI & declarations, FLARE CY2024.

# Caldwell County



**80,025**  
People

**\$42,901**  
Median HH income

**47.1%**  
Combined ALICE + poverty

**Relatively Low**  
FEMA NRI risk

### People & economy

Children (0-14)		16%
Seniors (65+)		20%
Median age		44.6
ALICE households		11,135
Poverty households		4,309

### Risk & response

Expected annual loss	\$25.0M
Social vulnerability (SVI)	65.0%
FEMA declarations (all time)	23
Home fires, CY2024	54
Fires, no RC notification	10
Bridge assistance · DRO 220-25	—
Major-donor giving · 3-yr	\$12,500

Caldwell County · sources: Red Cross demographics 2023, United Way ALICE, FEMA NRI & declarations, FLARE CY2024.

# Wilkes County



**65,116**  
People

**\$45,142**  
Median HH income

**53.9%**  
Combined ALICE + poverty

**Relatively Moderate**  
FEMA NRI risk

### People & economy

Children (0-14)		16%
Seniors (65+)		20%
Median age		45.3
ALICE households		9,335
Poverty households		4,757

### Risk & response

Expected annual loss	\$33.1M
Social vulnerability (SVI)	70.7%
FEMA declarations (all time)	22
Home fires, CY2024	29
Fires, no RC notification	3
Bridge assistance · DRO 220-25	—
Major-donor giving · 3-yr	\$80,493

Wilkes County · sources: Red Cross demographics 2023, United Way ALICE, FEMA NRI & declarations, FLARE CY2024.

# Watauga County



**54,684**  
People

**\$51,025**  
Median HH income

**54.7%**  
Combined ALICE + poverty

**Relatively Low**  
FEMA NRI risk

### People & economy

Children (0-14)		10%
Seniors (65+)		16%
Median age		32.5
ALICE households		6,359
Poverty households		5,234

### Risk & response

Expected annual loss	\$26.0M
Social vulnerability (SVI)	42.4%
FEMA declarations (all time)	24
Home fires, CY2024	16
Fires, no RC notification	7
Bridge assistance · DRO 220-25	—
Major-donor giving · 3-yr	\$85,611

Watauga County · sources: Red Cross demographics 2023, United Way ALICE, FEMA NRI & declarations, FLARE CY2024.

# Alexander County

**36,241**

People

**\$57,632**

Median HH income

**42.4%**

Combined ALICE + poverty

**Relatively Low**

FEMA NRI risk

## People & economy

Children (0-14)  **17%**

Seniors (65+)  **19%**

Median age **43.3**

ALICE households **4,355**

Poverty households **1,535**

## Risk & response

Expected annual loss **\$10.6M**

Social vulnerability (SVI) **45.6%**

FEMA declarations (all time) **19**

Home fires, CY2024 **10**

Fires, no RC notification **2**

Bridge assistance · DRO 220-25 **—**

Major-donor giving · 3-yr **\$30,000**

Alexander County · sources: Red Cross demographics 2023, United Way ALICE, FEMA NRI & declarations, FLARE CY2024.

# Ashe County



**26,500**  
People

**\$44,247**  
Median HH income

**48.7%**  
Combined ALICE + poverty

**Relatively Low**  
FEMA NRI risk

### People & economy

Children (0-14)		15%
Seniors (65+)		24%
Median age		48.6
ALICE households		3,899
Poverty households		1,939

### Risk & response

Expected annual loss	\$17.8M
Social vulnerability (SVI)	45.2%
FEMA declarations (all time)	26
Home fires, CY2024	7
Fires, no RC notification	0
Bridge assistance · DRO 220-25	—
Major-donor giving · 3-yr	—

Ashe County · sources: Red Cross demographics 2023, United Way ALICE, FEMA NRI & declarations, FLARE CY2024.

# Avery County



**17,750**  
People

**\$49,378**  
Median HH income

**54.6%**  
Combined ALICE + poverty

**Relatively Low**  
FEMA NRI risk

### People & economy

Children (0-14)		12%
Seniors (65+)		21%
Median age		44.4
ALICE households		2,824
Poverty households		757

### Risk & response

Expected annual loss	\$11.3M
Social vulnerability (SVI)	71.9%
FEMA declarations (all time)	22
Home fires, CY2024	3
Fires, no RC notification	0
Bridge assistance · DRO 220-25	—
Major-donor giving · 3-yr	\$10,000

Avery County · sources: Red Cross demographics 2023, United Way ALICE, FEMA NRI & declarations, FLARE CY2024.

# Allegheny County



**11,094**  
People

**\$40,528**  
Median HH income

**53.1%**  
Combined ALICE + poverty

**Very Low**  
FEMA NRI risk

### People & economy

Children (0-14)		14%
Seniors (65+)		25%
Median age		49.4
ALICE households		1,941
Poverty households		738

### Risk & response

Expected annual loss	\$6.6M
Social vulnerability (SVI)	71.7%
FEMA declarations (all time)	20
Home fires, CY2024	6
Fires, no RC notification	1
Bridge assistance · DRO 220-25	—
Major-donor giving · 3-yr	\$5,000

Allegheny County · sources: Red Cross demographics 2023, United Way ALICE, FEMA NRI & declarations, FLARE CY2024.

# The chapter's Experience Builder apps & federal tools.

## Red Cross Intelligence Briefing

Chapter risk, hardship, hazards & county drilldowns

[experience.arcgis.com](http://experience.arcgis.com)

## Disaster Response Intelligence

Spatial disaster-response intelligence

Experience Builder app

## Red Cross Real Estate

Facilities & market intelligence

[experience.arcgis.com](http://experience.arcgis.com)

## Service Area Planning

Service-area geography & planning

Experience Builder app

## Community Mobilization V

Local resource & mobilization map

[experience.arcgis.com](http://experience.arcgis.com)

## Biomed

Blood & BioMed footprint

[experience.arcgis.com](http://experience.arcgis.com)

## FEMA RAPT

Resilience analysis & planning

[www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov)

## Census Community Resilience

People & resilience context

[www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)

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Red Cross Experience Builder apps give the live, drill-down companion to this report; federal tools add official context.

# Every number, traceable.

Tools produce facts; humans own decisions. Each figure in this report traces to a named source and vintage.

METRIC	SOURCE	VINTAGE
<b>geography + 2023 demographics</b>	ALICE master / Red Cross reference table	2023
<b>ALICE + poverty households</b>	MASTER counties ALICE+demographics	2023
<b>flare</b>	flare_fire_incidents (public AGOL, CY24)	CY2024
<b>smoke_alarms</b>	GIS_MAP_FY15_to_FY24 (AGOL item b09f21d9...)	FY15–24
<b>lives_saved</b>	Lives_Saved_Map_30_Apr_2026 (AGOL item ff313330...)	2026
<b>blood</b>	Biomed Collections 22-26 by chapter/county	FY22–26
<b>risk + disaster history</b>	FEMA NRI 2025 · CDC SVI 2022 · FEMA declarations (red-cross-data county master)	FEMA NRI 2025 · SVI 2022
<b>fema disaster history</b>	FEMA Disaster Declarations Summaries v2	2026
<b>facilities / real estate (no costs)</b>	Red Cross facilities portfolio — reintel.jbf.com (locations, types & ownership only; no cost/lease terms)	FY25
<b>home-fire RC responses (SFF/MFF)</b>	DRO National 800-RedCross Calls by County (org AGOL)	FY24–26

Geography: American Red Cross chapter↔county reference. The full machine-readable source ledger ships with the data bundle.

# Full county table.

COUNTY	POP	HOUSEHOLDS	HARDSHIP	NRI RISK	EXP. ANNUAL LOSS	FIRES '24
<b>Gaston</b>	235,996	94,577	43.7%	Relatively Moderate	\$59.3M	85
<b>Catawba</b>	163,189	65,874	41.3%	Relatively Low	\$45.4M	69
<b>Cleveland</b>	100,558	40,543	41.1%	Relatively Low	\$27.3M	47
<b>Lincoln</b>	90,859	36,136	37.7%	Relatively Low	\$32.2M	17
<b>Burke</b>	86,831	35,102	45.7%	Relatively Low	\$22.8M	28
<b>Caldwell</b>	80,025	33,169	47.1%	Relatively Low	\$25.0M	54
<b>Wilkes</b>	65,116	27,402	53.9%	Relatively Moderate	\$33.1M	29
<b>Watauga</b>	54,684	21,799	54.7%	Relatively Low	\$26.0M	16
<b>Alexander</b>	36,241	14,447	42.4%	Relatively Low	\$10.6M	10
<b>Ashe</b>	26,500	11,738	48.7%	Relatively Low	\$17.8M	7
<b>Avery</b>	17,750	6,901	54.6%	Relatively Low	\$11.3M	3
<b>Alleghany</b>	11,094	4,975	53.1%	Very Low	\$6.6M	6

One row per county. Combined hardship = poverty + ALICE households. Fires = FLARE CY2024.