

Helene ravaged the NC plant that makes 60% of the country's IV fluid supply

Hurricane Helene's catastrophic damage and flooding to the Southeastern states may affect the country's medical supply chain.

Hospitals nationwide are bracing for a possible shortage of essential intravenous fluids after the cataclysmic storm inundated a vital manufacturing plant in North Carolina.

The plant is Baxter International's North Cove manufacturing facility in Marion, which is about 35 miles northeast of Asheville. Helene unleashed unprecedented amounts of rain throughout the western part of the state, killing dozens and ravaging numerous communities, homes, and other structures, including the plant.

The North Cove plant produces 60 percent of the country's supply of IV solutions, typically producing 1.5 million bags per day, according to the American Hospital Association. The dozens of sterile solutions Baxter makes at the facility are used for everything from intravenous rehydration and drug delivery to peritoneal dialysis used to treat kidney failure.

"Our hearts and thoughts are with all those affected by Hurricane Helene," Baxter CEO José Almeida said in a statement on September 29. "The safety of our employees, their families, and the communities in which we operate remains our utmost concern, and we are committed to helping ensure reliable supply of products to patients. Remediation efforts are already underway, and we will spare no resource—human or

financial—to resume production and help ensure patients and providers have the products they need.”

Critical supply

On October 2, Mass General Brigham, Massachusetts’ largest hospital and health care system, warned employees via email of a “serious and immediate IV fluid shortage,” according to the Boston Globe.

<https://arstechnica.com/health/2024/10/helene-ravaged-the-nc-plant-that-makes-60-of-the-countrys-iv-fluid-supply/>