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### **STATEMENT ON EVACUATION OF ASHE GARDENS MEMORY CARE**

SEPT. 15, 2018, 6:15 PM, Burgaw, NC – Residents and staff at Ashe Gardens Memory Care were evacuated today beginning at approximately 4:25 PM, after rising water threatened to enter the building. Ashe Gardens had been the host to 55 residents from Castle Creek Memory Care, a sister community that had already evacuated from New Hanover County, near the NC coast.

Local fire officials and law enforcement surveyed the situation at 3:30 PM and assisted in the evacuation. County officials opened nearby Burgaw Elementary School as shelter for the residents and staff, and provided school buses for transportation. Ashe Gardens' caregiving staff quickly readied the residents for transport, safeguarded valuables, and secured the building, while dietary staff made dinner to take to the shelter. By 4:25 PM, residents were boarding the buses for their destination; water had still not entered the building.

An emergency management official said that in the history of Ashe Gardens, the building had never flooded before.

The American Red Cross is assisting with cots and supplies for the shelter. Additional cots and supplies were immediately dispatched from an Affinity Living Group (ALG) storage facility in Zebulon. As of 5:30 PM, the residents had arrived at the elementary school and were preparing for dinner.

Ashe Gardens and Castle Creek are two of 89 communities in North Carolina operated by ALG. The communities began readying generators, emergency lighting, stores of food, water, and medicines, and other supplies last weekend. ALG set up a "command center" at its Home Office in Hickory to respond to communities' needs in the wake of Hurricane Florence. The Home Office has taken hourly reports from buildings in Hurricane Florence's path, and has deployed supplies and staff as needed across the state. Nine communities near the NC coast were evacuated on Tuesday and Wednesday, as recommended by the North Carolina Department of Emergency Management; two of those groups returned to their buildings today.

Charles Trefzger, founder and Chief Executive Officer of ALG, said, "Resident safety is our number one priority. While we cannot predict the path or consequences of any storm, we can and will predict our response. We train for emergency situations like this one and I am proud of the Ashe Gardens team for reacting quickly and calmly."

Residents and staff will return to the building as soon as it is deemed safe. Visit Ashe Gardens' Facebook page at [www.fb.me/AsheGardens](http://www.fb.me/AsheGardens) for updates on the situation. ###