

Hurricane Irene



An image released by the NOAA made from the GEOS East satellite shows Hurricane Irene on Wednesday as it moves northwest from the Dominican Republic. (NOAA/AP)

Like clockwork, Hurricane Irene — the Atlantic's first hurricane of 2011 — was born on Aug. 22, later strengthening to a Category 2 hurricane. Last year was another good example of an active storm season ramping up after Aug. 20. All of the 2010's major hurricanes (those of Category 3 or higher) formed after Aug. 20, starting with Danielle on Aug. 21.

Aug. 20 seems to be special because around this time, the air and ocean are in just the right state to foster and feed the monster storms. In climate-speak, this time of year is when vertical shear (a change in wind directions with height) in the atmosphere is low enough and sea surface temperatures are warm enough to create big storms.

Irene is currently a Category 2 storm, with winds of up to 100 mph (160 kph), and is the first serious threat to the U.S. coast in three years. If no hurricanes make landfall in 2011, this three-season lull will be the longest in recorded history.

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For Emergencies contact 911
For information call: 1-888-243-1690

Safety From Hurricanes

Hurricanes are severe tropical storms that form in the southern Atlantic Ocean, Caribbean Sea, Gulf of Mexico and in the eastern Pacific Ocean. People who live in hurricane prone communities should know their vulnerability, and what actions should be taken to reduce the effects of these devastating storms. The information on this page can be used to save lives at work, home, while on the road, or on the water.



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Familiarize yourself with the terms that are used to identify a hurricane.

A hurricane watch means a hurricane is possible in your area. Be prepared to evacuate. Monitor local radio and television news outlets or listen to NOAA Weather Radio for the latest developments.

A hurricane warning is when a hurricane is expected in your area. If local authorities advise you to evacuate, leave immediately.

Disaster Relief Kit

Water - at least 1 gallon daily per person for 3 to 7 days

Food - at least enough for 3 to 7 days
— non-perishable packaged or canned food / juices

- foods for infants or the elderly
- snack foods
- non-electric can opener
- cooking tools / fuel
- paper plates / plastic utensils

Blankets / Pillows, etc.

Clothing - seasonal / rain gear/ sturdy shoes

First Aid Kit / Medicines / Prescription Drugs

Special Items - for babies and the elderly-
Toiletries / Hygiene items / Moisture wipes

Flashlight / Batteries

Radio - Battery operated and NOAA weather radio

Telephones - Fully charged cell phone with extra battery and a traditional (not cordless) telephone set

Cash (with some small bills) and Credit Cards - Banks and ATMs may not be available for extended periods

Keys

Toys, Books and Games

Important documents - in a waterproof container or watertight resealable plastic bag

— insurance, medical records, bank account numbers, Social Security card, etc.

Tools - keep a set with you during the storm

Vehicle fuel tanks filled

Pet care items

- proper identification / immunization records / medications
- ample supply of food and water

Prepare your family

Make a Family Emergency Plan. Your family may not be together when disaster strikes, so it is important to know how you will contact one another, how you will get back together and what you will do in case of an emergency. You should also consider:

- Evacuation plans
- Family communications
- Utility shut-off and safety

Safety skills

Prepare Your Business

Businesses have a critical role in preparedness. Putting a disaster plan in motion now will improve the likelihood that your company will survive and recover. *Ready Business* outlines commonsense measures business owners and managers can take to start getting ready.

Plan to Protect Property

Hurricanes cause heavy rains that can cause extensive flood damage in coastal and inland areas. Everyone is at risk and should consider flood insurance protection.

Flood insurance is the only way to financially protect your property or business from flood damage. To learn more about your flooding risk and how to protect yourself and your business, visit the NFIP Web site, www.floodsmart.gov or call 1-800-427-2419.

Step 3: Be Informed

Hurricane hazards come in many forms: lightning, tornadoes, flooding, storm surge, high winds, even landslides or mudslides can be triggered in mountainous regions. Look carefully at the safety actions associated with each type of hurricane hazard and prepare your family disaster plan accordingly. But remember this is only a guide. The first and most important thing anyone should do when facing a hurricane threat is to use common sense.

For further information please visit:

www.nhc.noaa.gov/HAW2/english/prepare/supply_kit.shtml