

2026 HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS GUIDE

NORTHERN GULF
COAST EDITION



NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE
Mobile/Pensacola



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Atlantic Hurricane Season begins on June 1st each year, and it's never too early to start preparing for the potential impacts of hurricanes. Regardless of this year's seasonal outlook, it only takes one storm affecting our area to make it a bad season. Whether you call the coast home, live farther inland, or visit our beautiful beaches on vacation, knowing what to do and how to prepare for hurricanes can make all the difference.

This year's guide includes many tips to help you prepare for hurricane season. One of the most important tips is to follow trusted sources for weather and emergency information. Your local National Weather Service office, county Emergency Management Agency, and local broadcast meteorologists provide reliable, localized information to help you make informed decisions and put your preparedness plans into action when needed. You can follow the NWS Mobile/Pensacola Office on social media @NWSMobile and online at [weather.gov/mob](https://www.weather.gov/mob). Your local NWS will be here for you before, during, and after the storm, providing the latest information!

This guide will help you better understand the hazards and impacts of tropical systems and what steps you can take to prepare.

We encourage you to be a force multiplier by sharing preparedness information with family, neighbors, and community members so everyone is ready if a hurricane threatens our area. Calm periods of weather are the perfect time to prepare!

NWS Mobile/Pensacola Tropical Team

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE Mobile/Pensacola



Contents and Editing: NWS Mobile/Pensacola

ALL IT TAKES IS ONE

Whether this year is an active or a slow hurricane season, it only takes one storm to change your life and the face of your community.

OUR HURRICANE SEASON PLEA – We must be prepared for the TOTAL tropical threat. Consider ALL of the potential threats from hurricanes to your community and your home, not just the category of the storm!

The first step in preparing for hurricanes is to know your risk. The more you know, the better prepared you will be to react accordingly to the potentially life-threatening hurricane threats. Find out today what hurricane-related hazards can happen where you live.

Remember: Hurricanes are NOT just a coastal problem. Impacts from wind and water can be felt 100s of miles inland. Significant impacts can occur regardless of storm strength.

During hurricane season, be a HERO and pass vital information on the weather, shelters, and evacuation routes to others. YOU could be the lifeline between loved ones and life-saving information. *Note: Always ensure the information comes from a reliable source.*

You could save a life!
BE THE HERO

Share important weather information from reliable sources with friends, family, and those less informed.



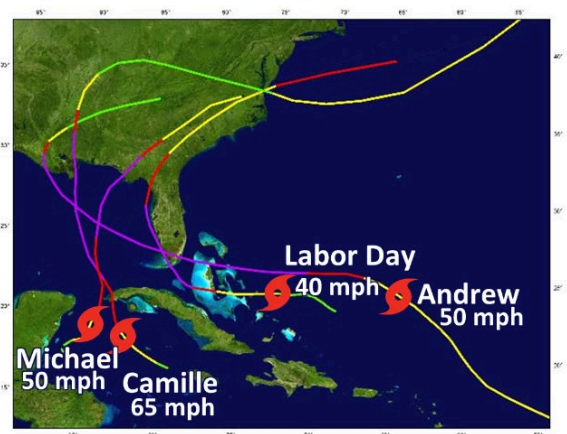
In addition to us, make sure to follow your county and state Emergency Management Agencies and your local TV meteorologists and stations on social media to stay up-to-date on the latest local forecasts and information during hurricane season.

HURRICANE SEASON REMINDER – Keep in mind that you won't always get 5 days to prepare ahead of a storm. Here's a look at where all U.S. Landfalling Category 5 Hurricanes were 5 days before landfall and 3 days before landfall.

5 DAYS BEFORE LANDFALL



3 DAYS BEFORE LANDFALL



AIM TO BE WEATHER-READY THIS HURRICANE SEASON. BE PREPARED, NOT SCARED.

ARE YOU READY?

Take this quiz to find out if you're ready for hurricane season! Be #HurricaneStrong!

	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>
Have you and your neighbors pooled resources and identified who has items like a grill, deep freezer, generator, or chainsaw? You may have a resource that neighbors may need, so sharing resources in the aftermath of a storm can help many!	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you know where you and your family will go if ordered to evacuate?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have emergency plans for your pets? Most shelters do not allow pets, and many animal clinics close if they are in harm's way.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If you take medicine, do you have a 7-day supply of medications and prescriptions? Don't forget about other family members' prescriptions, too.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have flashlights and extra batteries? You won't want to run down your cellphone battery by using its flashlight feature.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have at least a 3-day supply of drinking water and non-perishable foods available? Allow one gallon of water per person per day.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Will you have cash available during power outages? ATMs will not work during power outages.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you already have plywood or other materials to protect your windows?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is your insurance policy up-to-date with new valuables or housing improvements? Consider taking photos or videos of your belongings.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are your family's personal records and important documents stored in a waterproof container?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have a generator? Even a tropical storm can disrupt power to your home for several days.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

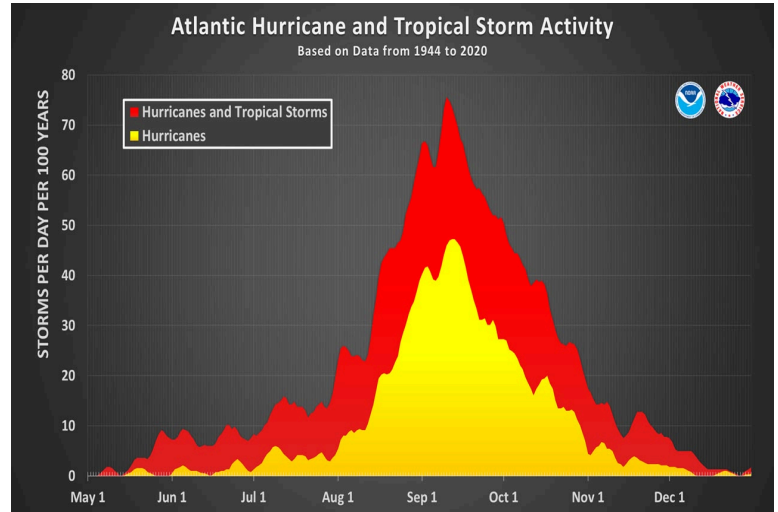
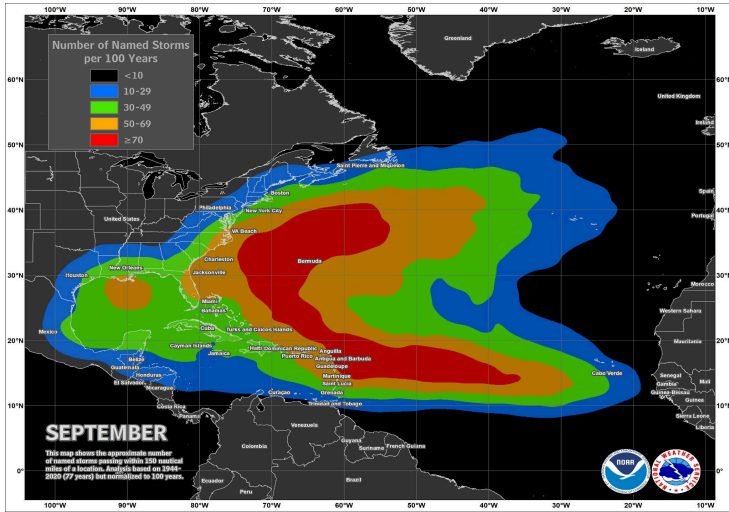
How many YES responses do you have?

9 or more	Very good! You are more prepared than most people!
5 to 8	Not too shabby. Look into how you can improve this score.
4 or less	Let's get serious about preparing now! Don't wait until a storm develops in the Gulf to prepare.

HURRICANE SEASON & CLIMATOLOGY

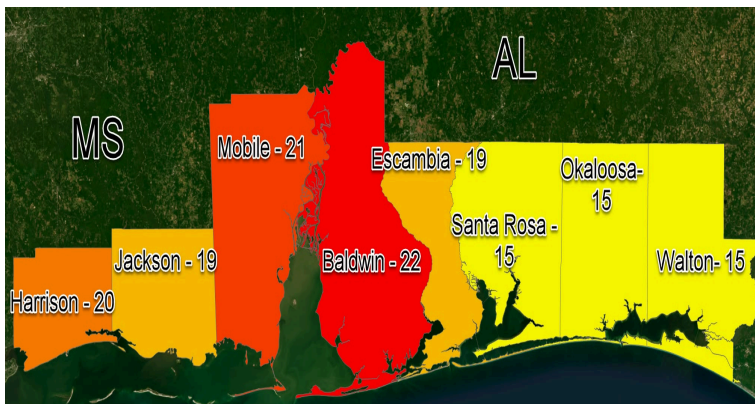
Hurricanes and tropical storms form over warm ocean waters, like those found in the Gulf, typically during the summer and autumn each year.

Hurricane season in the Atlantic basin runs from June 1 through November 30. The Atlantic basin includes the Atlantic Ocean, the Caribbean Sea, and the Gulf of America. On average, 14 tropical storms and 7 hurricanes develop in the Atlantic basin each hurricane season. The peak of hurricane season occurs in August and September for our region, with most activity occurring between mid-August and mid-October.

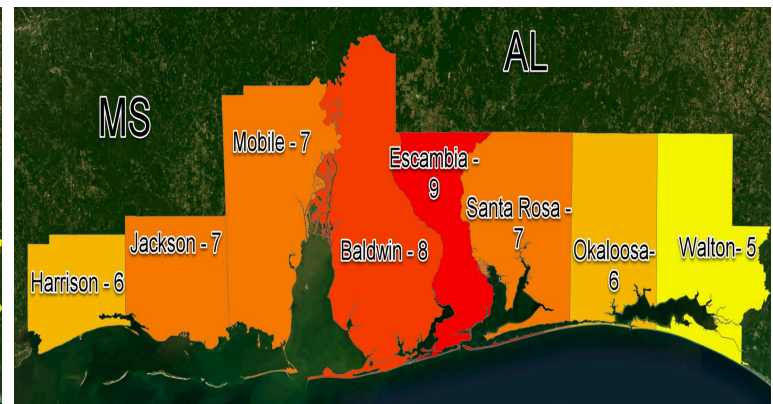


Hurricanes can strike any month during hurricane season. Sixteen hurricanes have either directly impacted or produced moderate to major impacts to the interior parts of southeast Mississippi, southwest and south-central Alabama, and northwest Florida since 1990.

While the greatest damage resulting from landfalling hurricanes or tropical storms is typically along the coast, which is closest to the strongest winds and storm surge, inland areas also experience destructive winds, tornadoes, and flooding from heavy tropical rains.



ALL Hurricanes Within 50 Miles 1900-2022



MAJOR Hurricanes Within 50 Miles 1900-2022

For that reason, everyone along the northern Gulf Coast needs to be prepared during hurricane season. Be prepared, not scared!

FORECASTS & ADVISORIES

The National Hurricane Center (NHC) in Miami, FL, is the official source for tropical advisories and forecasts. NHC is responsible for issuing tropical watches and warnings for the entire United States.

TROPICAL WATCHES AND WARNINGS

NOTE: Hurricane preparedness activities become difficult once winds reach tropical storm force, so watches and warnings are issued in advance of the onset of tropical storm force wind (39–73 mph)

Hurricane/Tropical Storm WATCH:

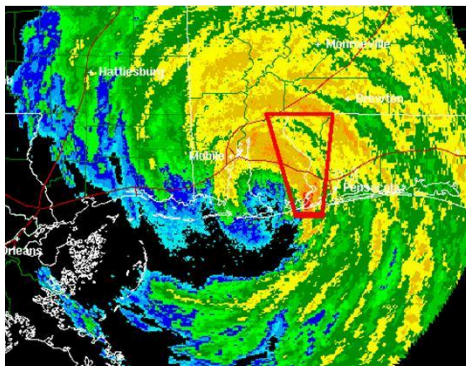
Tropical Storm and/or Hurricane conditions are POSSIBLE somewhere in the specified area (typically issued 48 hours in advance of the onset of tropical storm force winds)

Hurricane/Tropical Storm WARNING:

Tropical Storm and/or Hurricane conditions are EXPECTED somewhere in the specified area (typically issued up to 36 hours in advance of the onset of tropical storm force winds)

Extreme Wind WARNING (EWW):

Short duration warning for the onset of extreme sustained winds (115+ mph) associated with the eyewall of a major hurricane (**NOTE: This is the final call to shelter in place!!**)



Storm Surge Watch/Warning:

Possibility/Danger of life-threatening inundation from rising water moving inland from the shoreline somewhere within the specified area, generally within 48/36 hours.

COMMON TROPICAL PRODUCTS

- Tropical Weather Outlook
- Public Advisories
- Forecast Discussions
- Hurricane Local Statements

NHC FORECAST REMINDERS

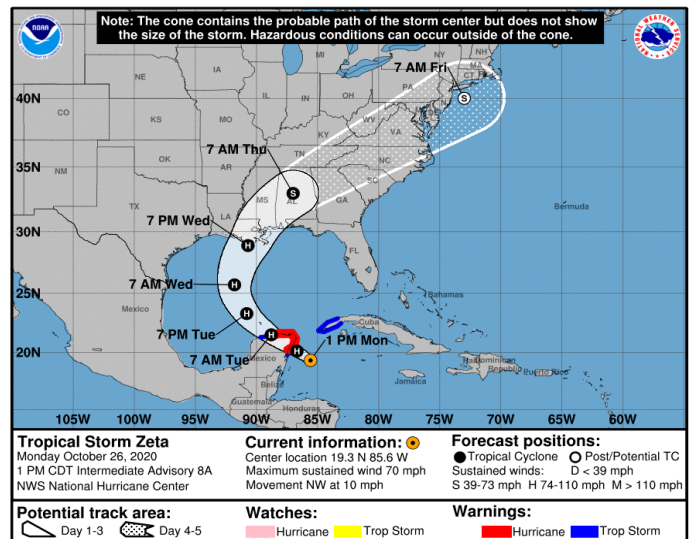
The NHC forecast cone represents the 5-year average error, and the center of the storm will remain in the white error cone 67% of the time

The forecast cone is NOT a cone of impacts

REMEMBER: Hurricane conditions can be felt 100s of miles from the center of the storm

DO NOT focus solely on the exact forecast track or the skinny black line

DO NOT wait for a Hurricane Watch or Warning to be issued for your location before you begin to implement your initial preparedness preparations – it may be too late!



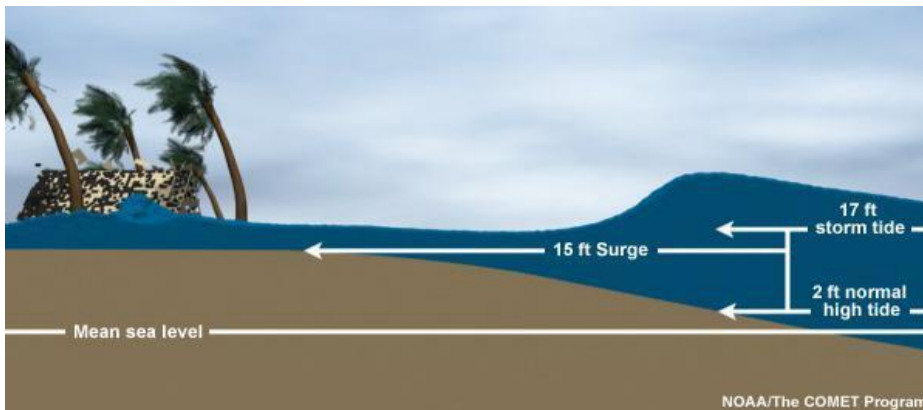
STORM SURGE

Storm surge is the wall of water pushed toward the shoreline as a hurricane moves ashore. Storm surge is often the greatest threat to life and property from a hurricane along our coast.

Storm surge is highest near and to the right of where the eye of the hurricane crosses the coast. The advancing storm surge combines with the normal tide to create what we refer to as storm tide.

Wind-driven waves on top of storm tide can lead to extreme flooding in coastal areas, especially during high tide, resulting in storm tides reaching up to 20+ feet in some cases. The rise in water level can cause significant damage to structures along the immediate coast.

Coastal buildings that survive hurricane-force winds can be severely damaged if their foundations are undermined or weakened by erosion. Adding to the destructive power of the surge, battering waves may increase damage to buildings directly along the coast.



There are a number of factors that determine the storm surge for any location along the coast: forward speed of the storm, size of the storm, angle of approach to the coastline, central pressure of the storm, coastal feature shape, and coastal feature characteristics, such as bays and estuaries.

In general, the more intense a hurricane and the closer a community is to the center or right quadrant of a hurricane, the more destructive the storm surge.

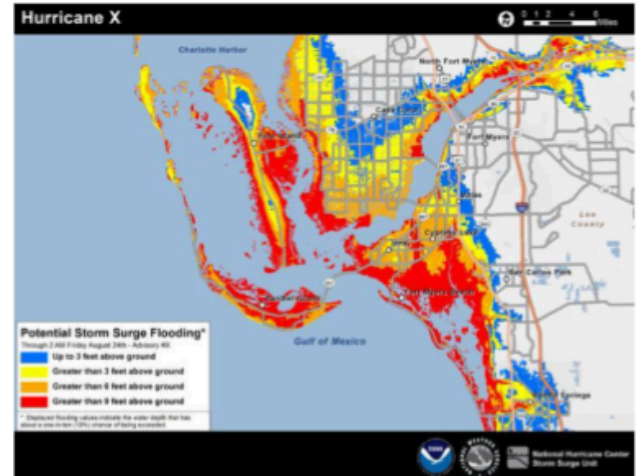
Those living on or near the coast should know the evacuation zone for their residence. When local officials declare an evacuation for your zone, move to the nearest possible evacuation destination outside of the danger zone.

When officials say it is time to evacuate...GO! Storm surge can arrive well ahead of the hurricane due to long-period swells. Don't wait until the last minute to evacuate. Lots can be forgotten if you pack and evacuate at the last minute, so it is important for you and your family to figure out these details well ahead of time. Plan Ahead!



STORM SURGE

1. Storm surge is often the greatest threat to life and property from a hurricane. It poses a significant threat of drowning. Six inches of fast-moving flood water can knock over an adult. Two feet of rushing water can carry away most vehicles, including SUVs.
2. Storm surge can cause water levels to rise quickly and flood large areas – sometimes in just minutes – and you could be left with no time to take action if you have not already evacuated.
3. Storm surge values do not correspond well to the hurricane wind categories (Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale) that range from 1 to 5. These categories are based only on wind and do not account for storm surge.
4. Tropical storms, hurricanes, major hurricanes, and post-tropical cyclones can ALL cause life-threatening storm surge.
5. Storm surge can occur with non-tropical storms like Nor'easters and winter storms.
6. Many areas along the Gulf and East Coast are vulnerable to storm surge, including areas several miles inland from the coastline.
7. Storm surge can occur before, during, or after the center of a storm passes through an area. Storm surge can cut off evacuation routes, so do not delay leaving if an evacuation is ordered for your area.
8. During the peak of storm surge, emergency responders will likely NOT be able to reach you if you are in danger.
9. Even if your community is not directly affected by storm surge, it could experience other hazards from the storm, such as impassable roads, water and sewage problems, and power outages. If power remains on, downed electrical wires can pose an electrocution risk.
10. Weather conditions and the forecast can change. Local officials can issue evacuations for many different reasons. **Always follow the instructions of local officials.**



If a tropical storm or hurricane is threatening your community, go to www.hurricanes.gov to view a map that will show potential storm surge flooding

Know Your Maps, Know Your Zone!

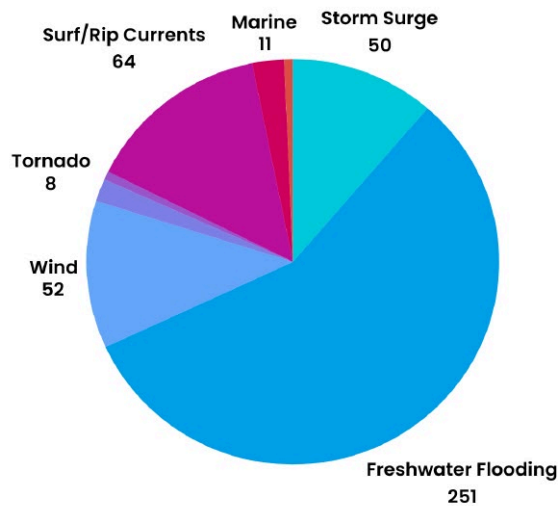
The *Potential Storm Surge Flooding* map is different from FEMA flood insurance rate maps and hurricane evacuation zone maps.

- You do not have to live in a floodplain to experience storm surge from a hurricane or other storm
- Evacuation zones can be established for many public safety reasons & differ from areas shown on this map

Find out if you live in a hurricane evacuation zone!

INLAND FLOODING

When it comes to hurricanes, wind and storm surge are only part of the story. Heavy rain and the resulting inland freshwater flooding are equally as dangerous and destructive. There were 442 direct fatalities in the United States from 2013–2022, and freshwater flooding was responsible for nearly 57% of those direct fatalities.



Heavy rain is not directly related to the intensity of a tropical storm or hurricane. Some of the highest rain totals occurred during weaker storms that slowly drifted or stalled over an area for hours or days.

Slow-moving tropical storms and hurricanes can produce tremendous amounts of rain in a short period of time. This often results in disastrous flooding, which can be a major threat to communities hundreds of miles inland from the coastline.

PRACTICAL WAYS TO PROTECT YOURSELF FROM FLOODING:

- **Buy Flood Insurance – A Plan for Replaceable Items**
 - Flood damage is NOT typically covered by homeowner’s insurance
- **Protect Your Personal Documents and Special Items**
 - Store valuables in plastic tubs with locking tops
 - You need to be able to secure and move ALL your valuables within 15 minutes in case of a last-minute evacuation
- **Minimize Flood Damage By “Flood Proofing” Your Home**
 - Know how to shut off the main circuit breaker to eliminate the threat of electrocution
 - Raise outside air conditioning units onto platforms
 - Store rarely used/expensive items in the attic or on high shelves
- **Develop a Flood Emergency Plan**
 - Determine if you live in a flood zone
 - Have an evacuation plan with alternate routes
 - Communicate the plan with family and friends
- **If Advised to Evacuate, Do So IMMEDIATELY**
 - Stay up-to-date on local road conditions
 - Move to a safe location before access is cut off by floodwaters
- **Never Drive Across Flooded Roads Or Around Barricades!**
 - Do not attempt to cross flowing water on foot or in a vehicle
 - Never drive through the water if you cannot see the road or road markers, as it may be washed away
 - Abandon the vehicle and seek higher ground if caught in rising water



RIP CURRENTS

Rip currents are powerful, narrow channels of water flowing away from the beach. Think of a rip current like this - it is a natural treadmill traveling away from the beach. A rip current is dangerous because it can sweep even the strongest swimmers out to sea. For that reason, rip currents are life-threatening to anyone entering the surf. While rip currents can form at any time, they are likely to be present in the high winds and rough seas that accompany tropical storms and hurricanes.

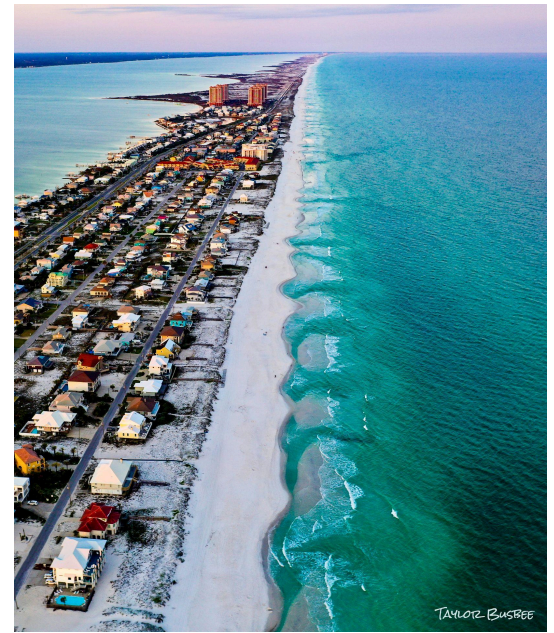
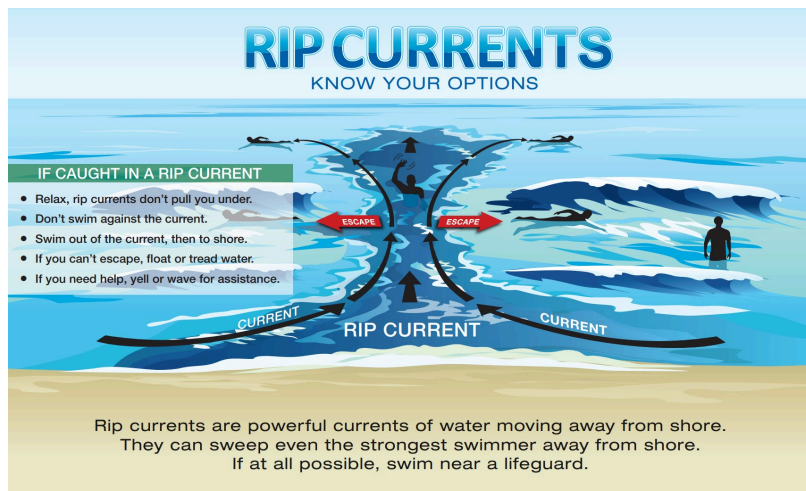
BEACHGOERS SHOULD STAY OUT OF THE WATER WHEN A STORM IS APPROACHING.

A tropical storm or hurricane does not have to directly affect our area for rip currents to develop along our coastline.

Anytime a tropical system is in the Gulf, large swells and higher-than-normal tides can produce dangerous rip currents along the beaches. As a result, beachgoers are at risk of getting caught in a rip current even if the skies are clear and it is a beautiful beach day.

IF CAUGHT IN A RIP CURRENT:

- Stay calm; don't fight the rip current
- Swim parallel to the beach to escape the rip current
- If you can not escape, flip on your back and float
- Wave and yell for help



Beach Warning Flags



Water Closed to Public



High Hazard

High Surf &/or Strong Currents



Medium Hazard

Moderate Surf &/or Currents



Low Hazard

Calm Conditions, Exercise Caution



Dangerous Marine Life

Absence of Flags Does NOT Assure Safe Waters

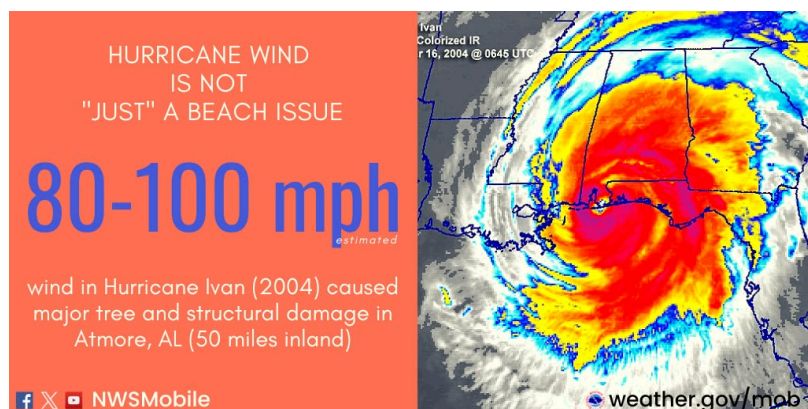
Both Florida and Alabama use the 5-flag system to alert beachgoers of surf conditions. Flags are posted at all public beaches where surf conditions and rip currents are monitored throughout the day. **RED FLAGS** mean conditions are life-threatening to anyone entering the surf. In some locations, it is **illegal** to enter the water when **DOUBLE RED FLAGS** are being flown.

WIND

Hurricane-force winds of 74 mph or greater can destroy buildings, mobile homes, power lines, and trees. Debris such as signs, roofing material, and siding, as well as small items left outside, become dangerous flying missiles during a hurricane.

The winds associated with a hurricane are most intense near the center of the storm, in a region called the eyewall. As a hurricane moves inland, the strong winds in the eyewall begin to decrease, but hurricane-force winds can still be felt 150+ miles inland from the coast.

GENERAL RULE-OF-THUMB: The faster the hurricane is moving, the further inland the hurricane-force winds will be experienced. Don't let your guard down simply because you don't live in a coastal county!



Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale

Category	Sustained Wind
1	74-95mph, 64-82kt
2	96-110mph, 83-95kt
3	111-129mph, 96-112kt
4	130-156mph, 113-136kt
5	157+mph, 137+kt

Category 3+ is considered a **MAJOR** hurricane

Atlantic hurricanes are classified into 5 categories according to the Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale, which estimates potential property damage according to the hurricane's sustained wind speed.

Keep in mind that the category of the hurricane does not tell the whole story and does not take into account any other hazards associated with the hurricane, such as the potential for storm surge, flooding, tornadoes, or rip currents. We must be prepared for the TOTAL tropical threat.

To minimize damage from the wind, it is critical to ensure that your home is well constructed.

MOBILE HOME RESIDENTS MUST EVACUATE! Mobile homes, manufactured homes, RVs, campers, and tiny homes do NOT provide a safe shelter from hurricane-force winds. Straps and other tie-downs will not protect a mobile or manufactured home from high winds associated with a hurricane. Residents who live in these types of homes must evacuate when told to do so by local authorities.

When making landfall, there is always some uncertainty in the exact intensity and landfall location of the storm. It is important to weigh this uncertainty against the potential risks to yourself and your family. It is common practice for emergency managers and local officials to add a buffer or safety margin to their plans - oftentimes planning for a storm that makes landfall one category higher than forecast. This is a necessary precaution to reduce the risk of loss of life and minimize the potential impact of the storm. It is essential to incorporate a buffer or safety margin into your hurricane season preparations!

TORNADOES

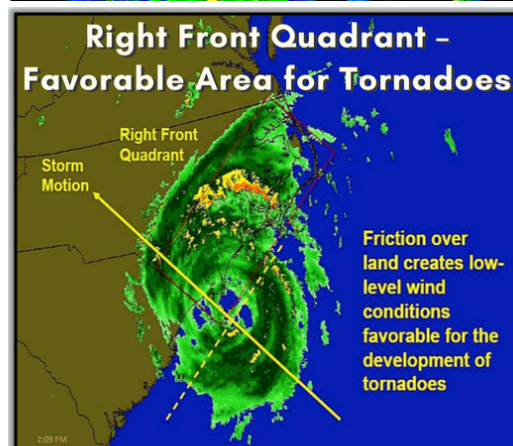
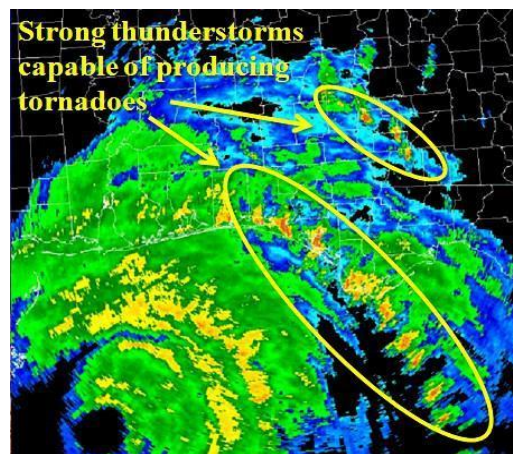
Hurricanes and tropical storms can produce **tornadoes**! Tropical tornadoes are oftentimes embedded in thunderstorms that are located in the outer rainbands of the storm, usually away from the center of the storm.

Tropical tornadoes are most likely to occur in the right-front quadrant of a storm, as this area generally has the best combination of wind shear and instability.

Nearly 70% of landfalling hurricanes produce at least one tornado, and some even spawn tornado outbreaks. In 2004, Hurricane Ivan, which made landfall along the Alabama Gulf Coast, spawned 117 tornadoes over a 3-day period!

While tornado outbreaks are less common in hurricanes and tropical storms, it is important to recognize that tornadoes are possible once the outer rainbands of a storm begin to move onshore. Note that tropical tornadoes are not just a coastal problem, as they can impact communities 100s of miles inland. Tropical tornadoes can catch people off-guard, as the movement of these tornadoes is oftentimes in a direction different from supercell tornadoes - tropical tornadoes move with the outer rainbands, which means the movement is sometimes to the north or northeast in our area.

Tropical tornadoes are typically weak (EF0-EF1) and short-lived. Tropical tornadoes are typically less intense than tornadoes produced by supercell thunderstorms during severe weather season, but when added to the larger area of hurricane-force winds, these tropical tornadoes can still produce substantial damage and potentially be deadly.



After Tropical Storm Claudette in June of 2021, NWS survey teams found tornado damage consistent with a 22+ mile long EF-2 tornado that greatly impacted the East Brewton community in Escambia County, AL, and points northward into Conecuh County, AL.

TORNADO SAFETY TIPS: Put shoes on when taking shelter, so you don't walk on debris in bare feet if your home is hit. Use a helmet to protect your head. Go to the lowest floor of a building. Get under a sturdy table or a stairwell. Cover up with blankets and pillows.

NOAA WEATHER RADIO

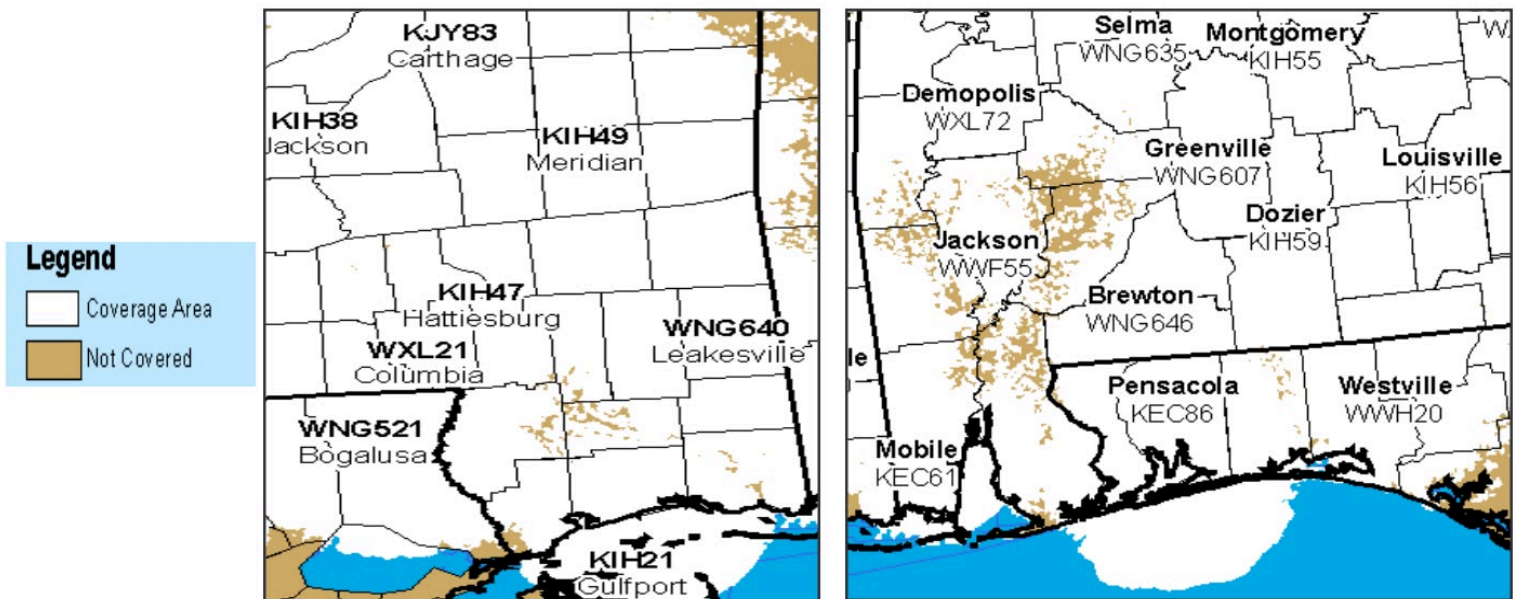
NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards (NWR) is the official voice of the National Weather Service. NWR provides continuously updated weather information, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Watches, warnings, advisories, forecasts, current conditions, and climate data are broadcast in 3-5 minute cycles.



A special radio capable of receiving signals in the Very High Frequency (VHF) public service radio band is required to listen to NWR broadcasts. 7 frequencies from 162.400 to 162.550 MHz are used. Weather radios can be purchased at most electronics stores and online. Prices of these radios vary and depend on the type of radio.

NOAA Weather Radio is useful at any time but becomes especially important during hazardous weather. Watches and warnings are given the highest priority with frequent updates. NWS is a major part of the Emergency Alert System (EAS) that disseminates warning information rapidly through commercial broadcast outlets. In an emergency, each NWR station will transmit a warning alarm tone followed by information on the emergency situation. This signal is capable of activating specially designed receivers by increasing the volume or producing a visual and/or audible alarm. Not all weather radios have this capability, but all weather radios can receive emergency broadcasts.

These maps show the locations of NOAA Weather Radio transmitters located in our area.



Transmitters in south Mississippi

Transmitters in south Alabama & northwest Florida

Legend
 Coverage Area
 Not Covered

NWR Area Listings

KEC61	Mobile, AL	162.550 MHz
KEC86	Milton, FL	162.400 MHz
KIH59	Dozier, AL	162.550 MHz
WNG607	Greenville, AL	162.425 MHz
WNG640	Leakesville, MS	162.425 MHz
WNG646	Brewton, AL	162.475 MHz
WWF55	Jackson, AL	162.500 MHz
WXL72	Demopolis, AL	162.475 MHz

SAME CODES:

www.weather.gov/nwr/counties

LOCAL NOAA WEATHER RADIO INFORMATION:

www.weather.gov/mob/nwr

PLANNING AND PREPARATION

HOME PREPARATION TIPS FOR HURRICANE SEASON

MOBILE HOMES

- Check tie-downs for any rust or breakage

LANDSCAPING

- Trim trees, shrubs, and dead limbs, especially near your home
- Repair or replace broken or damaged fences
- Shredded bark is preferred for landscaping instead of small gravel or stone bedding

ROOFING

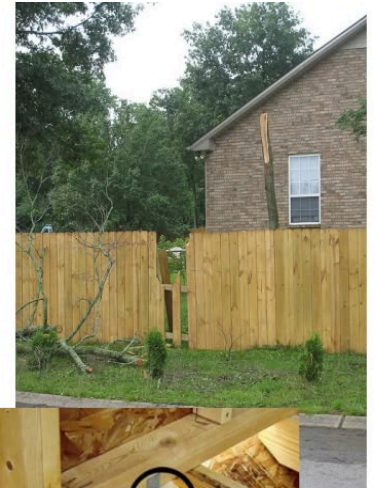
- Inspect your roof for loose tiles, shingles, or debris, and consider replacing old or damaged shingles with new ones rated for hurricane-force winds
- Check and install hurricane clips to secure roof trusses to side walls
- Clear clogged rain gutters and downspouts

DOORS

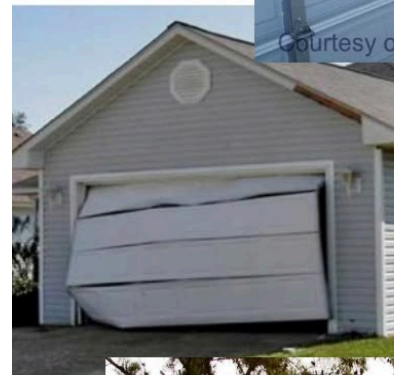
- Reinforce garage doors and tracks or replace with a hurricane-tested garage door
- Reinforce double-entry doors with heavy-duty foot and head bolts
- Use a security deadbolt with a 1-inch minimum bolt length
- Doors can be shuttered, but one entry must be left easily accessible

WINDOWS

- Inspect existing shutters to ensure good condition and/or install tested or manufactured hurricane shutters
- Alternative: Use $\frac{5}{8}$ inch or greater exterior grade plywood secured by 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ inch screws or special clips. Obtain wood and fasteners; cut wood to size (labeling pieces); pre-drill holes; place anchors on the home.
- Store shutters or plywood lying flat to avoid significant warping when not in use



Courtesy of LAS Enterprises



PLANNING AND PREPARATION

PROTECTING YOUR BOAT – TIPS FOR BOAT OWNERS

- Check your marina contract for any hurricane procedures and policies
- Check with your boat manufacturer for the proper way to secure your boat during a tropical storm or hurricane
- Consider moving arrangements **well in advance**
- Trailer boats should be removed from the water and securely stored at least 48 hours before a tropical storm or hurricane is expected to make landfall
- Purchase the necessary hurricane materials: additional mooring lines, crew anchors, fenders, fender boards, chafing gear, and anchors
- Safe storm moorings should consist of good- condition ropes of sufficient diameter and length with at least 3-4 substantial anchor points
- Do NOT moor parallel to the bank, as receding tides often breach and/or capsize boats in this type of anchorage



MARINE SAFETY RESOURCES:

www.hurricanes.gov/prepare/marine.php



AUTOMOBILE TIPS

- It is important to have your vehicle serviced regularly and ensure it is in good working order to ensure it is ready for use in case you need to evacuate
- Keep a full gas tank in your vehicle (or fully charged) if an evacuation seems likely
- Make an emergency kit specifically for your vehicle, including jumper cables, flashlight, cell phone charger, first aid kit, water, snacks, etc.

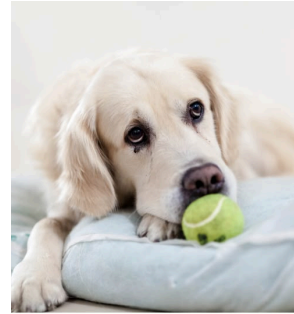
VEHICLE PREPAREDNESS TIPS: www.ready.gov/car

PET PREPAREDNESS

You must plan ahead to ensure you can properly care for your pets during a weather emergency or evacuation. Your plan should include all family members, including pets!

A FEW PLANNING SUGGESTIONS

- **TAKE YOUR PET** — If you must leave home, take your pet with you. You are the best person to care for your pet. Think About It: if the situation is dangerous for you, then it's dangerous for your pet.
- **WHERE TO TAKE YOUR PET** — Know where to take your pet before you leave. Find out which motels or hotels are “pet friendly” or accept pets in an emergency. Plan to go to a friend or relative's house who will allow you to bring your pet.
- **CRATE** — Before you travel, make sure your pet is accustomed to being in a crate. Familiar surroundings can help ease anxiety in your pet. Don't forget to pack their favorite toys and treats to make them feel more comfortable.
- **DISASTER KIT** — Always pack your pet's food, medicines, vaccination records, and pet insurance information. Assemble this into a disaster kit that you can quickly grab.
- **PRE-ARRANGEMENTS** — If you get stuck away from home, your pet will be better off if you make pre-arrangements with a neighbor or friend to take care of your pet. This temporary caretaker needs a list of phone numbers to reach you and instructions to properly care for your pet. Your instructions should include a signed authorization for veterinary care and financial limits to the veterinary care.
- **BEHAVIOR** — Emergencies can cause pets to display unexpected or uncharacteristic behaviors. Well-behaved pets may become aggressive and defensive after a major disruption in their lives. Your pet may not return to its usual behavior for several weeks. Use caution when releasing your pet after a storm, especially in unfamiliar surroundings, and ensure your pet cannot escape. Do not release your pet outside until you know the area is safe. Allow your pet plenty of time to rest and adapt to new surroundings. If possible, provide your pet with familiar toys.



BEFORE THE STORM

Put favorite toys, treats or bedding items for your pet in your hurricane preparedness kit

Familiar items can help reduce stress for your pet, especially during an evacuation

Take a selfie with your pet in case your pet wanders off or gets lost

[weather.gov/mob](https://www.weather.gov/mob)



FEMA PET PREPAREDNESS: www.ready.gov/pets

RED CROSS PET PREPAREDNESS:

www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/pet-disaster-preparedness.html

HURRICANE SUPPLY KIT

- **Water** — At least 1 gallon daily per person for 3-7 days
- **Food** — Enough for at least 3-7 days
 - Non-perishable packaged or canned food and juices
 - Food for infants or the elderly
 - Snack foods
 - Cooking tools, fuel, non-electric can opener
 - Paper plates, plastic utensils
- **Blankets, Pillows & Bedding, etc.**
- **Clothing**
 - Seasonal
 - Rain gear
 - Sturdy shoes
- **First Aid Kit, Medicines, Prescriptions**
- **Special Items** - Items for babies and the elderly
- **Toiletries and Hygiene items**
- **Moist towelettes, garbage bags, and plastic ties for personal sanitation**
- **Items for Children**
 - Toys
 - Books
 - Games
- **Pet Care Items**
 - Proper identification, immunization records, and medications
 - An ample supply of food and water
 - Carrier or cage
 - Muzzle and leash
- **NOAA Weather Radio** — Battery operated
- **Flashlight & Batteries**
- **Keys**
- **Vehicle fuel tanks filled**
- **Tools** - Keep a set with you
- **Cellphone** — Fully charged cellphone with an extra battery (non-cordless telephone set)
- **Cash (small bills)** — Banks and ATMs may not be available for extended periods
- **Credit Cards**
- **Important Documents** - Place these documents in a waterproof container or watertight resealable plastic bag
 - Insurance
 - Medical records
 - Bank account numbers
 - Social Security card



FINAL CHECKLIST

ACTIONS TO TAKE WHEN A STORM IS IN THE GULF

- Listen to the radio, TV, and a NOAA Weather Radio for forecasts of the storm's progress
- Double-check the items in your emergency supply kit and ensure nothing has expired
- Fuel/charge and service your vehicles, as gas stations may close early or run out of gas
- Inspect and secure tie-downs for a mobile or manufactured home
- Make sure to have supplies to survive for **at least 72 hours**, preferably up to one week
- Board up windows (if no shutters), but do not use tape as it provides no protection
- Store lawn furniture and loose, lightweight objects like garbage cans, plants, and tools
- Get plenty of extra cash in case the power goes out, as ATMs will not work
- Store vehicles that are not being used
- Follow instructions issued by local officials and **EVACUATE IMMEDIATELY IF ORDERED**

FINAL ACTIONS TO TAKE (IF LEAVING)

- Turn off propane tanks
- Unplug small appliances and turn the refrigerator/freezer to the coldest setting
- Turn off utilities (water/gas/electricity) if ordered
- Notify family members and close friends of your evacuation plans and route
- Lower the water level in the swimming pool by one foot
- Lock your home securely
- Board the doors and brace the garage door
- Take your pets with you

FINAL ACTIONS TO TAKE (IF STAYING)

- Move your vehicle to a safe spot if not using it to evacuate
- Close storm shutters
- Turn the refrigerator and freezer to the coldest setting and only open them if necessary (NOTE: 25 pounds of dry ice keeps a 10-cubic-foot freezer below freezing for 3-4 days)
- Follow instructions from local officials and be prepared to turn off utilities if ordered
- Board doors (leaving an emergency exit), brace the garage door, and remain inside, away from boarded windows
- Take refuge in a pre-determined safe room like an interior closet, bathroom, or hall
- Beware of the calm wind in the eye of the storm - do not venture outside, as the strongest winds may occur shortly after the eye passes

DO NOT EXPECT EMERGENCY RESPONDERS TO BE OF ANY ASSISTANCE DURING A LANDFALLING HURRICANE!

AFTER THE STORM

Dangers remain even after the skies turn blue. This is NOT the time to let your guard down.

Emergency responders may be overwhelmed, so it could take hours or days for them to reach your area. During and after a storm, expect services to be disrupted for an extended amount of time. Be ready for power and phone service outages, roads blocked by floodwaters and debris, and water/sewer outages. Phone calls might be difficult, if not impossible, due to the impact on communication systems. Communicate via text or social media instead.

Listen to local authorities. After a hurricane, return home only after local authorities advise it is safe. Wait for the official ALL-CLEAR before attempting to return, and be prepared to show proof of residence.

DEBRIS CLEAN-UP – Don't push yourself! Straining your body can lead to heart attacks, heat strokes, and other serious issues. Perform cleanups slowly and take lots of breaks. Check on your elderly neighbors and other vulnerable people in your community.

Wear appropriate protective gear, such as boots, gloves, and safety glasses, when it comes to moving debris in the aftermath of a storm. Do NOT attempt to move structural supports or large pieces of debris after the storm, and BE CAREFUL using heavy-duty tools like chainsaws.

FLOODWATERS – Watch your step! Do not go into a room where water covers the electrical outlets or where cords are submerged. Floodwaters often hide sharp and dangerous debris like broken glass and shards of metal.

Hands off! Stay away from electrical utility equipment to prevent being electrocuted. See sparks or hear buzzing, crackling, snapping, or popping noises? Get out! Stay out of water that may have electricity in it.

Don't play in the floodwaters – they can contain chemicals or objects that could harm you or make you sick. You never know what is hidden or floating in the water (debris, gators, snakes, nutria, or even floating fire ants).

Be cautious in areas where the floodwaters have receded. Roads may have weakened and could collapse under the weight of a vehicle. Never drive through flooded roads, even if you are seeking supplies or trying to check on someone.

Hurricane Preparedness weather.gov/hurricane 

Use Caution After Storms

-  If you evacuated, only return home when directed it's safe to do so
-  Remain vigilant, as hazards remain: heat, downed powerlines, floodwaters, & more
-  Clean up safely: don't push yourself, and check on neighbors
-  Only use generators outdoors, 20+ feet from your home
-  Prepare for the likelihood that help and communications may not be available



After the Storm:
HAZARDS REMAIN

-  **Be careful near damaged buildings**
Do not enter a damaged building until local authorities say it's safe. Leave your home if there's shifting or unusual noises. If you smell gas, get outdoors immediately and call 911.
-  **Watch out for power lines**
Stay far away from damaged power lines, whether they've fallen to the ground or are dangling overhead.
-  **Don't walk or drive through floodwaters**
They can contain harmful bacteria, chemicals, sharp objects, live wires and reptiles/other animals. It only takes 12 inches of fast-moving water to sweep a car away.



weather.gov 

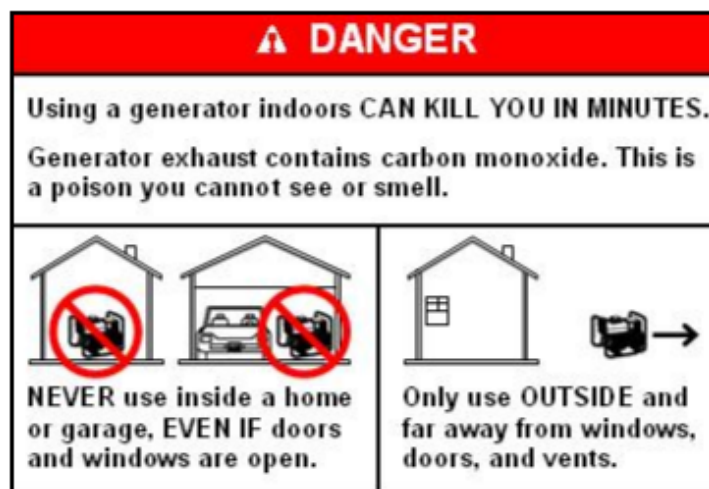
GENERATOR SAFETY

After a hurricane, primary electrical power will likely be off for hours if not days or weeks. During this time, many people use portable generators to run essential utilities such as lighting, air conditioning, and refrigerators.

Each year, people are injured or killed in incidents related to portable generator use. The primary hazards to avoid when using a portable generator are carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning from the engine exhaust, electrical shock or electrocution, and fire. **Always follow the directions supplied with the generator.**

GENERATOR USAGE TIPS FOR WHEN A DISASTER STRIKES:

- **NEVER use portable generators indoors** (this includes a garage, basement, carport, crawlspace, or an enclosed/ partially-enclosed area (even if it has ventilation))
- Using fans or opening windows/doors does not prevent the buildup of CO in your home
- Even if you cannot smell exhaust fumes, you may be exposed to CO
- If you feel sick, dizzy, or weak while using a generator, get fresh air RIGHT AWAY!



Courtesy of Consumer Product Safety Commission

- **Place the generator AWAY from windows, doors, and vents that allow CO to get indoors**
- **Keep the generator dry** and do not use it in the rain or wet conditions
 - Only operate a generator on a dry surface under an open canopy-like structure (such as under a tarp held up by poles)
 - Dry your hands before touching the generator
- **Turn the generator off and let it cool down before refueling**
- **Plug appliances directly into the generator** or use a heavy-duty, outdoor-rated extension cord that is rated at least equal to the sum of the connected appliance loads (the cord must be free of cuts or tears, and the plug must have three prongs/grounding pin)
 - Never power the house by plugging the generator into a wall outlet (known as “back feeding”) – this is extremely dangerous as it poses an electrocution risk to utility workers and neighbors served by the same utility transformer

GENERATOR SAFETY:

www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/power-outage/safe-generator-use.html

AFTER THE STORM CHECKLIST

IF EVACUATED, WAIT FOR "ALL CLEAR" FROM LOCAL OFFICIALS BEFORE RETURNING HOME AND BE PREPARED TO SHOW PROOF OF RESIDENCE.

GENERAL

- Be cautious of structural damage and downed trees and/or power lines – do not move structural supports or large pieces of debris
- DO NOT run power generators indoors, and ensure the exhaust is well ventilated
- DO NOT use open flames indoors
- Restrict driving to emergencies only – road conditions may be unsafe

DEBRIS

- Cities and counties will provide a schedule and instructions for debris pick-up and removal (NOTE: debris usually cannot be removed from private property)
- Construction materials, vegetative debris, household hazardous waste, and household appliances need to be placed into separate piles and moved to the curb for pick-up

WATER

- Use bottled, boiled, or treated water until you know that your water supply is safe
- You can use regular, unscented chlorine bleach to treat water for drinking or cleaning
NOTE: Add 1/8 teaspoon of bleach per gallon of clear water (¼ teaspoon of bleach per gallon if the water is cloudy) and allow water to stand 30 minutes before using

UTILITIES

- Check for gas leaks – DO NOT use a phone or turn on lights in your home, and if you smell or hear gas leaking, leave immediately! (Call the gas company from a neighbor's house)
- Report any visible damage to electrical lines to the power company, and turn off the power at the main breaker if any electrical equipment/circuits were exposed to water
- DO NOT connect a generator to your home's electrical circuits (NOTE: if a generator is online when electrical service is restored, it is a major fire hazard)

SEWAGE

- If you suspect water or sewage lines are damaged, do not use plumbing (toilets, sinks) and contact the water company or a plumber

INTERIOR CLEANUP

- Disinfect and dry interior buildings and inside items to prevent the growth of bacteria, viruses, mold, and mildew
- Clean walls, floors, and countertops with soap and water (NOTE: Disinfect with a solution of 1 cup bleach to 5 gallons of water)
- Wash clothes in hot water, spray unwashable items with disinfectant and air dry, steam clean carpets, and throw out items touched by water that can't be disinfected

Be #HurricaneStrong

2026 ATLANTIC HURRICANE SEASON

Arthur	Dolly	Gonzalo	Josephine	Marco	Paulette	Teddy
Bertha	Edouard	Hanna	Kyle	Nana	Rene	Vicky
Cristobal	Fay	Isaias	Leah	Omar	Sally	Wilfred

2027

Ana
Bill
Claudette
Danny
Elsa
Fred
Grace
Henri
Imani
Julian
Kate
Larry
Mindy
Nicholas
Odette
Peter
Rose
Sam
Teresa
Victor
Wanda

2028

Alex
Bonnie
Colin
Danielle
Earl
Farrah
Gaston
Hermine
Idris
Julia
Karl
Lisa
Martin
Nicole
Owen
Paula
Richard
Shary
Tobias
Virginie
Walter

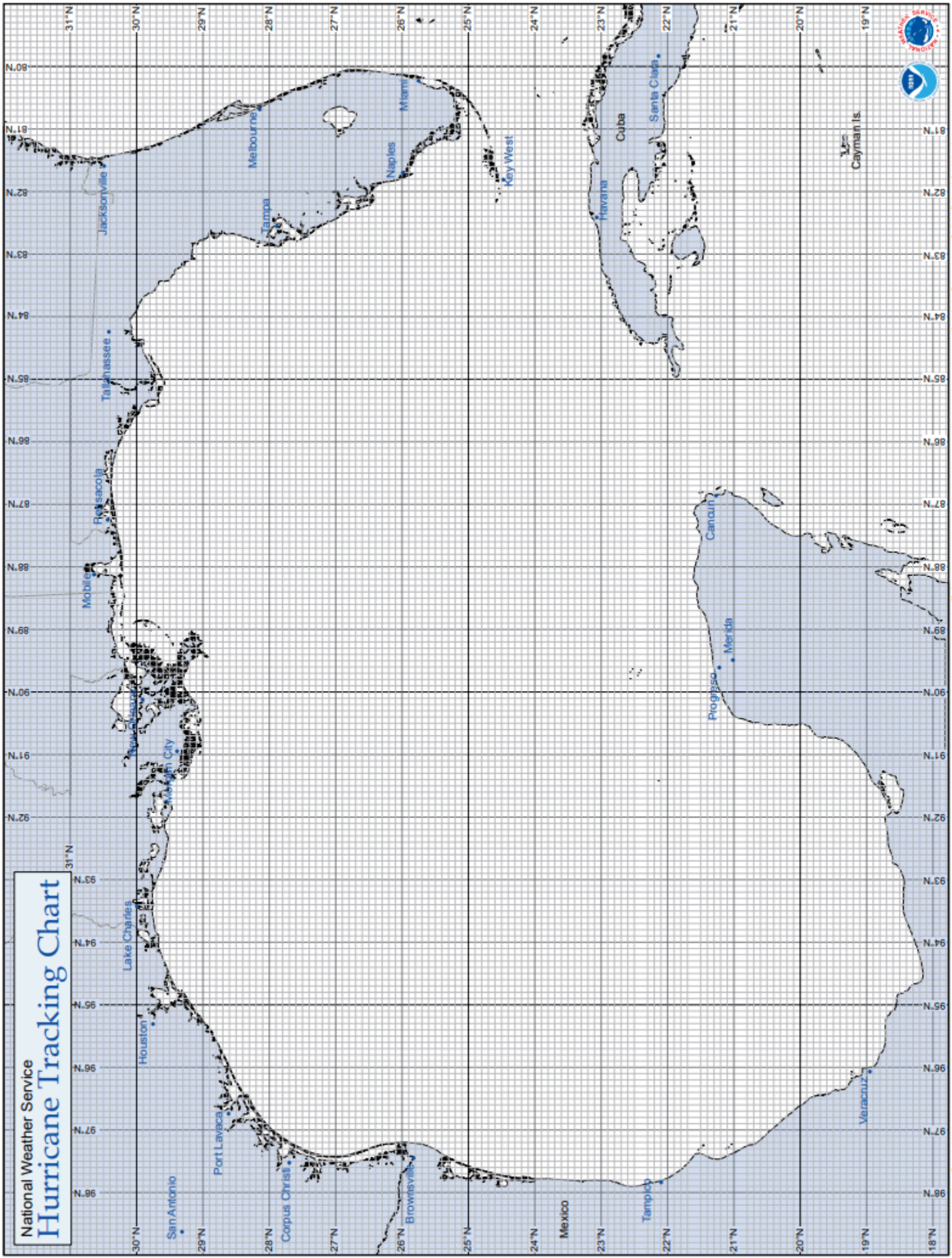
2029

Arlene
Bret
Cindy
Don
Emily
Franklin
Gert
Harold
Idalia
Jose
Katia
Lee
Margot
Nigel
Ophelia
Philippe
Rina
Sean
Tammy
Vince
Whitney

2030

Alberto
Brianna
Chris
Debby
Ernesto
Francine
Gordon
Holly
Isaac
Joyce
Kirk
Leslie
Miguel
Nadine
Oscar
Patty
Rafael
Sara
Tony
Valerie
William

National Weather Service Hurricane Tracking Chart



ADDITIONAL LOCAL RESOURCES

RESOURCES FROM NWS MOBILE/PENSACOLA

Local Tropical One-Stop-Shop: www.weather.gov/srh/tropical?office=mob

Hurricane Preparedness YouTube Playlist:

www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLZcEBOTgZxbyyjlcA1A5j-CW_4TTQuWWA

Hurricane Preparedness Videos (ASL):

www.youtube.com/watch?v=pmmZXiHXwuM&list=PL34exzZIOEfECivkbaTtsy36jJw0hQKp7

2026 Evacuation Zone List:

flash.org/hurricanestrong/wp-content/uploads/12/2025/05/5-8-25-Find-Your-Evacuation-Zone-Final.pdf

COASTAL ALABAMA — EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCIES

State of Alabama: www.ema.alabama.gov

Mobile County: www.mobilecountyema.gov

Baldwin County: www.baldwincountyal.gov/EMA

NORTHWEST FLORIDA — EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCIES

State of Florida: www.floridadisaster.org

Escambia County: www.myescambia.com/beready

Santa Rosa County: www.santarosa.fl.gov/emergency

Okaloosa County: myokaloosa.com/emergency-management

SOUTHEAST MISSISSIPPI — EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCIES

State of Mississippi: www.msema.org

2026 HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS GUIDE

8400 Airport Blvd, Bldg 11
Mobile, AL 36608
(251) 633-6443
www.weather.gov/mob

   NWSMobile



NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE
Mobile/Pensacola

