

# GENERAL HURRICANE INFORMATION

## KNOW THE HAZARDS:

**WIND** — A hurricane is a tropical storm with constant winds greater than 74 miles per hour. These winds can extend inland for hundreds of miles. Hurricanes can spawn tornadoes which add to its potential destruction.

**RAIN** — Because of the tropical nature of hurricanes, they contain rain. Sometimes the torrential rain will cause floods and flash flooding.

**STORM SURGE** — The most dangerous element of a hurricane is storm surge. This is a dome of ocean water that can be 20 feet high at its peak and 50 to 100 miles wide. Nine out of ten hurricane fatalities are attributable to the storm surge.



## WATCHES AND WARNINGS:

**HURRICANE WATCH** — The National Weather Service issues the advisory when there is a threat of *hurricane conditions within 24-36 hours*.

**HURRICANE WARNING** — This National Weather Service advisory is issued when *hurricane conditions are expected in 24 hours or less*.

## HURRICANE CATEGORIES:

CATEGORY	WIND SPEED	STORM SURGE
1	74-95 MPH	4-5 FEET
<i>Very dangerous winds will produce some damage:</i> Large branches of trees will snap and shallowly rooted trees may be toppled. Well-constructed frame homes could have damage to roof, shingles, vinyl siding and gutters. Extensive damage to power lines and poles likely will result in power outages that could last a few to several days. Low-lying coastal roads may be inundated, there may be minor pier damage and some small craft in exposed anchorage may be torn from moorings.		
2	96-110 MPH	6-8 FEET
<i>Extremely dangerous winds will cause extensive damage:</i> Well-constructed frame homes could sustain major roof and siding damage. Many shallowly rooted trees will be snapped or uprooted and block numerous roads. Near total power loss can be expected with outages that could last from several days to weeks. Major damage could occur to exposed mobile homes. Coastal roads and low-lying escape routes inland may be cut by rising water 2-4 hours before arrival of the hurricane's center. There may be considerable damage to piers. Marinas may be flooded and small craft in unprotected anchorages may be torn from moorings.		
3	111-129 MPH	9-12 FEET
<i>Devastating damage will occur:</i> Well-built framed homes may incur major damage or removal of roof decking and gable ends. Many trees will be snapped or uprooted, blocking numerous roadways. Electricity and water will be unavailable for several days to weeks after the storm passes. Practically all poorly-constructed signs will be blown down. Mobile homes may be destroyed. Serious flooding will occur at the coast and many smaller structures near the coast may be destroyed; low-lying escape routes inland may be cut by rising water 3-5 hours before the hurricane's center arrives.		
4	130-156 MPH	13-18 FEET
<i>Catastrophic damage will occur:</i> Well-built framed homes can sustain severe damage, with loss of most of the roof structure and/or some exterior walls. Most trees will be snapped or uprooted and power poles downed. Fallen trees and power poles will isolate residential areas. Power outages will last weeks to possibly months. Most of the area will be uninhabitable for weeks or months. There will be complete destruction of mobile homes. There will be major damage to the lower floors of structures near shore due to flooding and battering by waves and floating debris.		
5	157+ MPH	18+ FEET
<i>Catastrophic damage will occur:</i> A high percentage of framed homes will be destroyed, with total roof failure and wall collapse. Fallen trees and power poles will isolate residential areas. Power outages will last for weeks to possibly months. Most of the area will be uninhabitable for weeks or months. Small buildings may be overturned or blown away and there will be complete destruction of mobile homes. Low-lying escape routes inland may be cut by rising water 3-5 hours before the hurricane's center arrives.		