

SUNCOAST OBSERVER

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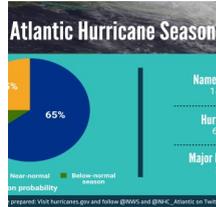
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Urbanization and Our Climate – A Meeting with Our Local Media



By: Austen Flannery

Florida is growing, and our area is growing with it. Does urbanization impact climatology records? Yes. Urbanization can be seen in climatological records in many locations around the world, including right here in West Central and Southwest Florida. However, this does not make data collected by sensors in increasingly urban areas invalid. In fact, these changes are important to capture in climatological records to better understand our changing climate, and how those changes impact the most densely urban areas.

In an effort to be transparent, facilitate more confidence in our climate products and services, and to address any specific needs, the NWS Tampa Bay Area office hosted two virtual meetings with TV Meteorologists from West Central and SWFL to discuss urbanization and our climate records. Exploring records, walking through case studies, and discussing why our climate sites are located where they are today, Meteorologists were able to discuss this very important topic and solicit feedback on how our local climate services can be improved. Out of these meetings came several action items, including the generation of additional daily reports from other climate sites.

Are you interested in learning more about this important topic? You can check out the information presented for yourself at <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/21ff8cc0406548668f8fe3f131b96025>

10th Annual Port Tampa Bay Hurricane Exercise

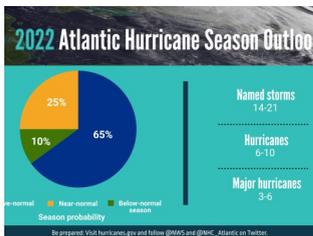


By: Brian LaMarre and Stephen Shiveley

The 10th annual Port Tampa Bay hurricane exercise was held on May 24th with over 125 attendees and several multi-agency emergency response partners, including NOAA, the U.S. Coast Guard Sector St. Petersburg, the Port Tampa Bay senior leadership, emergency management team, and Port Heavy Weather Advisory Group, Vessel Movement Committee, and Harbor Safety and Security Committee, as well as City of Tampa and Hillsborough County emergency management and law enforcement, MacDill Air Force Base emergency management, and Tampa Electric and Mosaic utilities, media, and more.

The 10th annual hurricane exercise, developed by Stephen Shiveley from NWS Tampa Bay, reviewed and relived the timeline from 2021 Hurricane Elsa with discussion benchmarks at 72 hours, 48 hours, 24 hours, and 12 hours from expected impacts. Each agency briefed on their status and readiness at these points to review best practices and preparedness plans.

The 2022 Hurricane Season Outlook and PTC1/TS Alex Local Impacts



By: Jen Hubbard

The Hurricane Season Outlook for the Atlantic Basin is calling for an above normal season again this year, with 14 to 21 named storms (winds of 39 mph or higher) forecasted, 6 to 10 of those becoming hurricanes (winds of 74 mph or higher), including 3 to 6 major hurricanes (category 3, 4 or 5; with winds of 111 mph or higher). This would make it the seventh consecutive above-average hurricane season. The increased activity anticipated this hurricane season is attributed to several climate factors, including the ongoing La Niña that is likely to persist throughout the hurricane season, warmer-than-average sea surface temperatures in the Atlantic Ocean and Caribbean Sea, weaker tropical Atlantic trade winds and an enhanced west African monsoon. An enhanced west African monsoon supports stronger African Easterly Waves, which seed many of the strongest and longest lived hurricanes during most seasons.

Southwest Florida has already experienced a touch of the first tropical system, with Potential Tropical Cyclone 1, which later developed into Tropical Storm Alex after it moved across south Florida and into the western Atlantic Ocean. This system originated near the Yucatan Peninsula in Mexico and traversed across the Gulf of Mexico as it was slowly developing. This system provided copious amounts of rainfall across south Florida, with our southern counties receiving 5 to 8 inches of rain from it. Areas in southeast Florida received 10 to 15 inches of rainfall and caused some significant flooding in coastal Miami-Dade and Broward Counties.

Hurricane Expos Help Spread Awareness to Citizens



By: Christianne Pearce

After being rescheduled due to potential tropical cyclone one, the Highlands County Hurricane Expo was a great success! The folks in Highlands County are no strangers to tropical events. In 2004 hurricanes Charley, Frances, and Jeanne all impacted the county within a couple of months. Hurricane Irma in 2017, which caused wide spread damage and power outages, is still fresh in their minds. Hurricane preparedness is something this community takes very seriously. I had the honor of representing TBW NWS at a booth as well as being one of the guest speakers.

There were thunderstorms in the area the day of the event, but that did not stop the crowds from attending. Many people were in attendance and stopped by the NWS table to say thanks for what we do and ask great questions. Quite a few asked about the NOAA weather radio and how to purchase one to be sure they are always informed of severe weather. Many people in the area are still recovering from a major hail storm that occurred in April, many had no idea the storm was even approaching. Being able to point them to the many options they have to receive storm alerts was rewarding.

Though my talk was focused on hurricane preparedness, it also included some props, like a weather balloon and radiosonde. My daughter also joined me for the day and helped inform the people about the difference between a hurricane watch and warning. Questions following the presentation included, more about the weather balloon process, the difference between tornados and straight-line winds, and of course questions about hurricanes. The main take away from the experience is that people enjoy participating in these types of events and genuinely appreciate the information received. It was a great opportunity to share the importance of hurricane preparation before, during and after a storm. As we say often, it only takes one to change your life forever.