

SUNCOAST OBSERVER

A quarterly newsletter brought to you by the National Weather Service Tampa Bay Area, FL

www.weather.gov/tampa

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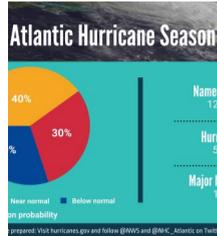
Top stories in this newsletter



Spring Integrated Warning Team Workshops Held in Tampa and Punta Gorda



Fatalities from 2022 Major Hurricane Ian



2023 Hurricane Season Outlook



NWS Florida Offices and NHC honored with Tropical Meteorology Award

Spring Integrated Warning Team Workshops Held in Tampa and Punta Gorda



By: Jen Hubbard and Austen Flannery

The National Weather Service Tampa Bay coordinated two Integrated Warning Team Workshops during the spring months. These workshops bring together partners from the Emergency Management and First Responder communities, media, and other local, state, and federal partners to share some of their experiences, highlight lessons learned, discuss best practices, and train on any upcoming changes for this hurricane season.

In addition, for the Punta Gorda Workshop, our office partnered with the Miami NWS office to include more of the southwest Florida region. To kick off the in-person discussion at both workshops, the keynote presentation featured Dr. Laura Myers and Dr. Chandra Clark from the University of Alabama. Dr. Myers and Dr. Clark were invited to speak virtually on social science topics surrounding effective hurricane messaging. Dr. Myers and Dr. Clark have extensive experience researching how people react and respond to information before, during, and shortly after natural disasters, including hurricanes. Lively discussions followed their keynote, with several action items coming away from this meeting. Some of those include collectively working to message hurricane risk and to localize the impacts for coastal and inland communities. Continuing to improve communication channels for high impact events was also discussed in detail. The overall feedback from partners was that this was one of the most productive IWTs that have been held by our offices. WFOs Tampa Bay and Miami continue to build relationships with partners during the dry season to be prepared during hurricane season.

Fatalities from 2022 Major Hurricane Ian



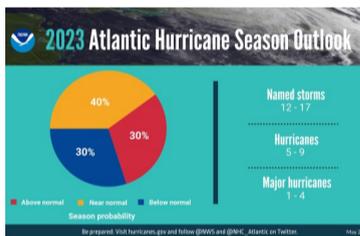
By: Dan Noah and sourced from the NHC Tropical Cyclone Report

In the United States, Ian was responsible for at least 156 fatalities, 66 of which were considered deaths directly caused by the storm. All direct deaths in the United States occurred in Florida. Storm surge was the deadliest hazard, claiming 41 lives, with 36 of the 41 surge fatalities occurring in Lee County, Florida. There were 12 direct fatalities attributed to freshwater flooding in central and eastern Florida, 8 were categorized as marine fatalities, 4 were related to wind, and 1 was due to rough surf. A boat carrying a reported 27 migrants travelling from Cuba to the United States capsized just off the coast of the Florida Keys in rough waters generated by Ian. While four passengers swam to shore and five were rescued, only seven bodies were recovered (accounting for 7 of the 8 marine deaths). It should be noted that the 11 other people missing from the boat are not represented in the total fatalities of this report. A couple living on a separate boat that was set adrift from the Florida Keys are also still missing.

Ian was also indirectly responsible for 90 casualties in the United States. Most of the victims (84 in total) were located in Florida, with 5 in North Carolina, and 1 in Virginia. The leading causes of death were lack of access to timely medical care (18), accidents (such a trip-and-fall during power outages; 16), and cardiac events (16). Other causes included vehicular accidents, accidents related to storm preparations or clean up, carbon monoxide poisoning, suicide, and homicide.

One thing all of the Hurricane Ian fatalities had in common was the age group impacted. Most of 156 fatalities were people over the age of 60. Make your plans now before the next hurricane approaches.

2023 Hurricane Season Outlook



By: Jen Hubbard

The 2023 Hurricane Season has already officially begun! The Climate Prediction Center, which is a part of the National Weather Service, has predicted a near-normal season this year for the Atlantic, with 12 to 17 named storms, 5 to 9 of those becoming a hurricane, and 1 to 4 of those a major hurricane (Category 3 or higher). This is less active than the past few years, as El Niño continues to develop, which can suppress Atlantic hurricane activity. However, there are some factors still that offset El Niño's suppressive ability, namely an above-normal west African monsoon which produces the easterly waves, and warmer-than-normal sea surface temperatures in the tropical Atlantic Ocean and Caribbean Sea which provide more energy to fuel storm development.

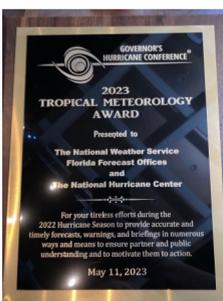
If you haven't made your personal hurricane plan, now's the time, before a storm threatens. Some considerations are:

1. Will you need to evacuate? Check your local county emergency management site or <https://www.floridadisaster.org/knowyourzone/> to find out if your home is in an evacuation zone and which one if so.
2. If you are in an evacuation zone, where would you go if you were told to do so from your local emergency management office? A friend or family member's house that lives outside the evacuation zone or a local inland hotel? Remember that when an evacuation order is issued, that doesn't mean that you need to evacuate hundreds of miles away to completely get out of the path of the storm. Those evacuation orders are to remove people out of the way of the storm surge threat area and/or out of homes that are not made to withstand the expected winds, such as mobile homes.
3. What should you include in your Preparedness Kit? <https://www.ready.gov/kit> is a great resource to help you build yours. And remember that you do not necessarily need to buy all of these supplies at once. Take advantage of BOGO sales and store the extra one in your kit or utilize the dollar stores for basic essentials.

Here are the 2023 Names for your familiarization:

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

NWS Florida Offices and NHC honored with Tropical Meteorology Award



By: Jen Hubbard

Each year, the National Weather Service Florida Offices and the National Hurricane Center collaborate to teach and present at the Florida Governor's Hurricane Conference. The conference honored our offices this year with the Tropical Meteorology Award. This was to acknowledge our "tireless efforts during the 2022 Hurricane Season to provide accurate and timely forecasts, warnings, and briefings in numerous ways and means to endure partner and public understanding and to motivate them to action."

We greatly appreciate this prestigious award, and would like to thank the Florida Governor's Hurricane Conference and our wonderful partners in Emergency Management! Protecting lives is our top mission, and as we strive to provide the best information possible, we absolutely could not do it without our partners. Thank you also to all of the team members at the Florida NWS Offices and at the National Hurricane Center for your dedication, service, and collaborative spirit!