

Know Your Watches and Warnings and other Misc. Information

Part of preparing for a hurricane is understanding the National Weather Service (NWS) forecast products, especially the meaning of [NWS watches and warnings](#).

Listen closely to local officials via TV, radio, cell phones, or computers for instructions. Evacuate immediately if instructed.

Watches

Storm Surge Watch: There is a chance of dangerously high water levels moving from the ocean onto land in the next two days. This could happen somewhere within the area that has been identified.

Hurricane Watch: Hurricane conditions, which means constant winds of at least 74 miles per hour, might hit your area. It's important to get ready for a hurricane before the winds get too strong. That's why a hurricane watch is announced two days before those strong winds are expected to start.

Tropical Storm Watch: Tropical storm conditions, with winds between 39 to 73 miles per hour, could occur in the area within the next two days.

Warnings

Storm Surge Warning: There is a danger of life-threatening rising water moving inland within 36 hours. Check evacuation orders if under a storm surge warning.

Hurricane Warning: Hurricane conditions (winds of 74 mph or more) are expected within the area. This warning is issued 36 hours in advance to allow time for preparations. Complete all preparations and evacuate if ordered.

Tropical Storm Warning: Expect tropical storm conditions (winds of 39 to 73 mph) within 36 hours.

Extreme Wind Warning: Anticipate extreme winds (115 mph or more) from a major hurricane within an hour. Take immediate shelter in the interior of a sturdy structure.

Hurricane and tropical storm watches and warnings, as well as storm surge alerts, may be issued for storms expected to develop tropical cyclone characteristics. These are called "potential tropical cyclones." Alerts can also be issued for "post-tropical cyclones," storms that have lost tropical characteristics but still pose dangers.

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Advisories

Tropical Cyclone Public Advisory: This advisory gives a rundown of all current coastal warnings and watches for tropical cyclones. It includes details like the cyclone's location, wind strength, movement, and potential hazards.

Tropical Cyclone Track Forecast Cone: This graphic shows where tropical storms and hurricanes might hit. The "cone" indicates where the storm center is likely to go, but remember, storms can affect areas far outside this cone, causing issues like tornadoes or flooding.

Hurricane and Tropical Storm Safety

When a tropical storm or hurricane forms in the Atlantic or the eastern North Pacific, the National Hurricane Center (NHC) and the Central Pacific Hurricane Center (CPHC) provide regular updates to keep everyone informed. These updates are issued at least every 6 hours at 5 am, 11 am, 5 pm, and 11 pm in their respective time zones.

What to Expect: If a tropical storm or hurricane is approaching, the NHC and CPHC will release public advisories every 3 hours. You can access this vital information in several ways:

Online: Visit <https://www.nhc.noaa.gov/> for the Atlantic and eastern North Pacific updates or [weather.gov/cphc](https://www.weather.gov/cphc) for Central Pacific updates.

Media/Radio: Tune in to TV, radio, or check your cell phone for updates. Use [NOAA Weather Radio](#) for real-time information.

Local Information: For storm forecasts and details specific to your area, check with your local Weather Forecast Office by visiting [weather.gov](https://www.weather.gov). Here, you'll find tailored information to help you prepare and stay safe during a storm.

Outlooks

- [Tropical Weather Outlook](#): The Tropical Weather Outlook talks about areas with bad weather and their chances of turning into tropical storms over the next five days. It gives a forecast on the likelihood of a tropical cyclone forming in the next two days and throughout the whole five-day period. You can also find graphical versions of the 2-day and 5-day Outlook at www.hurricanes.gov and www.weather.gov/cphc.