

ABOUT THE HURRICANE



A tropical cyclone is a large low pressure system that derives its energy from warm ocean waters of the tropics. It is characterized by a closed counterclockwise circulation in the Northern Hemisphere and thunderstorms organized near the center of circulation. The hurricane, the strongest classification of a tropical cyclone, typically has an eye at the center with a ring of thunderstorms around it, and spiral bands of thunderstorms extending outward from the center.

In the North Atlantic, the tropical cyclone is defined as a tropical depression, tropical storm or hurricane, depending on the strength of the maximum winds in the storm. Every tropical cyclone brings some combination of the following hazards: damaging winds, storm surge flooding, tornadoes, flooding from heavy rainfall, high surf and rip currents.

TROPICAL DEPRESSION:

A tropical cyclone with maximum sustained winds of 38 mph or less.

TROPICAL STORM:

A tropical cyclone with maximum sustained winds between 39 and 73 mph.

HURRICANE:

An intense tropical cyclone with sustained winds of 74 mph or higher.

TROPICAL STORM WATCH/WARNING:

Tropical Storm force winds are possible/expected in the watch/warning area generally within 48/36 hours.

HURRICANE WATCH/WARNING:

Hurricane force winds are possible/expected within the watch/warning area within 48/36 hours.

STORM SURGE WATCH:

The possibility of life-threatening inundation from rising water moving inland from the shoreline (storm surge flooding) somewhere within the specified area, generally within 48 hours.

STORM SURGE WARNING:

The danger of life-threatening inundation from rising water moving inland from the shoreline (storm surge flooding) somewhere within the specified area, generally within 36 hours.

SAFFIR-SIMPSON HURRICANE WIND SCALE

Category	Sustained Wind Speed (mph)	Damage
One	74 to 95	Dangerous, some damage
Two	96 to 110	Extremely dangerous, extensive damage
Three	111 to 129	Devastating damage
Four	130 to 156	Catastrophic damage
Five	157 or higher	Catastrophic damage

Useful Links

www.nhc.noaa.gov/aboutsshws.php

<https://www.aoml.noaa.gov/hrd-faq/>

<https://www.nhc.noaa.gov/aboutgloss.shtml>