

## **Hurricane Awareness and Hurricane Preparedness Week**

Hurricane Preparedness Week in Eastern New York and Western New England runs from May 5 through May 11, 2024. Hurricanes are not just a coastal problem. Impacts from water and wind can be felt hundreds of miles inland, and significant impacts can occur regardless of the storm's strength.

The best time to prepare for hurricanes is BEFORE hurricane season begins. Know your risk. Some inland valley locations have evacuation routes. Know your routes. Ready a go bag with Meds, baby supplies and important documents. Have a plan to care for pets or animals. Remember, flood insurance requires a 30-day waiting period.

The NWS Albany forecast area usually receives significant impacts from tropical storms or their remnants at least once per decade, but sometimes, more than once in the same year. Some examples of destructive tropical storms that have impacted inland areas of eastern New York and/or western New England include the "Long Island Express" (1938), Hazel (1954), Connie and Diane (1955), Agnes (1972), Floyd (1999), Irene and Lee (2011), Sandy (2012) and Ida (2021).

The biggest risk from tropical storms in our area is river and stream flooding. Wind damage from stronger storms is a secondary threat. The final threat to our area is storm surge flooding along the tidal reach of the Hudson River which can occur all the way to Albany, NY - 150 miles from the ocean!

When it comes to inland flooding, it is important to ignore the strength of any tropical storm, and instead, take note of the forecast rainfall. Extreme rainfall totals of 15 to 20 inches of rain have occurred in the Albany forecast area with tropical systems. This has resulted in devastating floods and flash floods. Recent examples of storms that produced catastrophic flooding include Irene and Lee in 2011 and Ida in 2021.

Rainfall forecasts and excessive rainfall outlooks can be found at <https://www.wpc.ncep.noaa.gov/#page=ovw>. River forecasts can be found at <https://water.noaa.gov/>. The National Water Prediction Service page also has forecast flood inundation mapping available for the NWS Albany forecast area.

Do you live along or near a stream or river? If so, monitor the progress of tropical systems. There is a lot of information available days ahead of a storm and deadly impacts can occur well outside the forecast "cone". Have a way to get weather alerts and forecast updates. Follow evacuation orders if given.

Use caution after storms have departed. Flooding and damaged infrastructure may linger for days or weeks. Tropical storms may knock out power. Follow boil water orders when received. Heat and cold can also be a problem. An August storm may leave you without power for air conditioning and refrigeration for days, while an October storm may leave you without heat.

The Atlantic hurricane season runs from June 1st through November 30th. The climatological peak of the season is in mid September, with the most active period from mid August to mid October. The National Hurricane Center (NHC) is the entity responsible for forecasting and tracking hurricanes in the North Atlantic basin (<https://www.nhc.noaa.gov/>). The NHC is located in Miami, Florida.

The 2024 North Atlantic Hurricane Season Outlook issued by NOAA and the National Weather Service will be released on May 16. This outlook is a general guide to the expected overall activity during the upcoming hurricane season. It is not a seasonal hurricane landfall forecast, and it does not predict levels of activity for any particular location.

It only takes one storm hitting an area to cause a disaster, regardless of the overall activity for the season. Therefore, residents, businesses, and government agencies of regions that are affected by hurricanes are urged to prepare every hurricane season regardless of the seasonal outlook.

NWS Albany