

PUBLIC INFORMATION STATEMENT
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE CHARLESTON SC
700 AM EDT SUN MAY 24 2015

...NATIONAL HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS WEEK BEGINS TODAY...

HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS WEEK WILL BE OBSERVED TODAY THROUGH SATURDAY MAY 30. THE ATLANTIC HURRICANE SEASON OFFICIALLY BEGINS JUNE 1. PARTNERS SUCH AS THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE...EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND THE AMERICAN RED CROSS ALL AGREE THAT PREPAREDNESS IS THE KEY TO MINIMIZING PROPERTY DAMAGE AND PREVENTING LOSS OF LIFE. THIS ANNUAL EVENT PROVIDES AN OPPORTUNITY TO REMIND EVERYONE ABOUT THE NUMEROUS HAZARDS ASSOCIATED WITH TROPICAL CYCLONES AND PROVIDE TIPS ON HOW TO PREPARE FOR THE UPCOMING HURRICANE SEASON. TODAY WE WILL DISCUSS THE BASICS OF TROPICAL CYCLONES.

TROPICAL CYCLONE CLASSIFICATION...

TROPICAL DISTURBANCE...A DISCRETE TROPICAL SYSTEM OF CLOUDS AND THUNDERSTORMS LACKING ATTRIBUTES OF A TROPICAL DEPRESSION.

TROPICAL DEPRESSION...AN ORGANIZED SYSTEM OF CLOUDS AND THUNDERSTORMS WITH A DEFINED SURFACE CIRCULATION AND MAXIMUM SUSTAINED SURFACE WINDS OF 38 MPH OR LESS.

TROPICAL STORM...AN ORGANIZED SYSTEM OF STRONG THUNDERSTORMS WITH A DEFINED SURFACE CIRCULATION AND MAXIMUM SUSTAINED SURFACE WINDS OF 39 TO 73 MPH.

HURRICANE...AN INTENSE TROPICAL WEATHER SYSTEM OF STRONG THUNDERSTORMS WITH A WELL-DEFINED SURFACE CIRCULATION AND MAXIMUM SUSTAINED SURFACE WINDS OF 74 MPH OR GREATER.

MAJOR HURRICANE...A CATEGORY 3-5 HURRICANE.

SUBTROPICAL CYCLONE...LOW PRESSURE SYSTEM WHICH EXHIBITS CHARACTERISTICS OF A TROPICAL CYCLONE AND AN EXTRATROPICAL LOW PRESSURE. IF SUFFICIENTLY STRONG, THESE SYSTEMS ARE NAMED AND CAN CREATE DANGEROUS CONDITIONS.

POST TROPICAL CYCLONE...FORMER TROPICAL CYCLONE WHICH NO LONGER EXHIBITS TROPICAL CHARACTERISTICS.

HURRICANES ARE CATEGORIZED ACCORDING TO THE STRENGTH OF THEIR WINDS BASED ON THE SAFFIR-SIMPSON HURRICANE WIND SCALE. A CATEGORY 1 STORM HAS THE LOWEST WIND SPEEDS...WHILE A CATEGORY 5 HAS THE STRONGEST. HOWEVER...THESE ARE RELATIVE TERMS...BECAUSE LOWER CATEGORY STORMS CAN SOMETIMES PRODUCE GREATER STORM SURGE AND INFLICT GREATER DAMAGE THAN HIGHER CATEGORY STORMS.

TROPICAL CYCLONES ARE GIVEN NAMES WHEN THEY REACH TROPICAL STORM STRENGTH. A SIX YEAR ROTATING LIST OF STORM NAMES DETERMINED BY THE WORLD METEOROLOGICAL ORGANIZATION ALTERNATES BETWEEN MALE AND

FEMALE NAMES. WHEN A TROPICAL CYCLONE PRODUCES SUBSTANTIAL DAMAGE AND/OR FATALITIES...THE NAME OF THAT TROPICAL CYCLONE IS RETIRED. NOTABLE RETIRED NAMES INCLUDE CAMILLE...HUGO...ANDREW...KATRINA AND SANDY.

TROPICAL CYCLONE DEVELOPMENT...

SOME OF THE INGREDIENTS FOR TROPICAL CYCLONES INCLUDE A PRE-EXISTING WEATHER DISTURBANCE...WARM WATER OF CONSIDERABLE DEPTH...ABUNDANT MOISTURE AND RELATIVELY LIGHT WINDS IN THE HIGHER LEVELS OF THE ATMOSPHERE.

TROPICAL CYCLONE CLIMATOLOGY...

EACH YEAR...AN AVERAGE OF 12 TROPICAL STORMS DEVELOP OVER THE ATLANTIC BASIN...WHICH INCLUDES THE ATLANTIC OCEAN...THE CARIBBEAN SEA AND THE GULF OF MEXICO. OF THESE...6 BECOME HURRICANES...WITH 2 OF THESE BECOMING MAJOR HURRICANES /CATEGORY 3 OR GREATER/. WHILE MOST TROPICAL CYCLONES REMAIN OVER THE OPEN WATER AND NEVER IMPACT LAND...ROUGHLY 5 HURRICANES WILL STRIKE THE UNITED STATES COASTLINE FROM TEXAS TO MAINE ON AVERAGE EVERY 3 YEARS.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON HURRICANES VISIT THE FOLLOWING WEBSITES...

NATIONAL HURRICANE CENTER...WWW.HURRICANES.GOV

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE CHARLESTON...WWW.WEATHER.GOV/CHS/TROPICAL

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