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HURRICANE FRAN...LOCAL STATEMENT...
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE WILMINGTON NC
6 PM EDT THU SEP 5 1996

...HURRICANE FRAN IS HEADED FOR CAPE FEAR NORTH CAROLINA...

...TORNADO WATCH IS IN EFFECT TILL MIDNIGHT...

A HIGH WIND WARNING IS POSTED FOR INLAND COUNTIES OF SOUTH AND NORTH CAROLINA. A FLASH FLOOD WATCH IS IN EFFECT FOR THE ENTIRE AREA.

AT 6PM...HURRICANE FRAN WAS AT LATITUDE 33.1 NORTH AND LONGITUDE 77.9 WEST...CENTERED 80 MILES SOUTH OF WILMINGTON. DOPPLER RADAR SHOWS THE NORTH WALL OF THE EYE ABOUT 40 MILES SOUTHSOUTHEAST OF SOUTHPORT. THE EYE IS ABOUT 25 MILES ACROSS...AND LANDFALL IS EXPECTED NEAR SOUTHPORT NORTH CAROLINA AT 730 PM. QUIETER CONDITIONS WITHIN THE EYE WILL LAST UP TO AN HOUR.

...WIND INFORMATION...

REPORTS FROM Horry COUNTY COASTAL SITES DESCRIBE GUSTS AS HIGH AS 70 MPH...AND IN NEW HANOVER COUNTY...DOPPLER RADAR INDICATES 80 MPH WINDS IN THE CAROLINA BEACH AND MONKEY JUNCTION AREA.

STRONGER WINDS ARE ASSOCIATED WITH THE EYE. FRYING PAN SHOALS TOWER...IN THE NORTHEAST EYE WALL...REPORTED SUSTAINED WINDS AROUND 90 MPH.

WINDS ALONG THE COAST WILL INCREASE TO AROUND 115 MPH...MOSTLY ALONG EAST FACING BEACHES IN SOUTHEAST NORTH CAROLINA OVER THE NEXT COUPLE OF HOURS AHEAD OF THE EYE.

GIVEN THE FORECAST TRACK...HURRICANE FORCE WINDS IN SOUTHEAST NORTH CAROLINA WILL DECREASE FROM THE SOUTH TO LESS THAN HURRICANE STRENGTH SOON AFTER MIDNIGHT. TROPICAL STORM FORCE WINDS...AT LEAST 40 MPH...WILL CONTINUE ACROSS THE AREA UNTIL AROUND SUNRISE FRIDAY.

...TIDES...

LOW TIDE WILL OCCUR AROUND 9 PM...SO LANDFALL WILL OCCUR WITH THE TIDE FALLING...AND ALMOST LOW.

...SEAS

THE FRYING PAN SHOALS TOWER...35 MILES SOUTHEAST OF CAPE FEAR...IS REPORTING 32 FOOT SEAS.

...STORM SURGE...

AS FRAN MAKES LANDFALL...THE STORM SURGE TO THE RIGHT OF THE EYE WILL LIKELY BE 12 TO 16 FEET...BUT THE EFFECT WILL BE MINIMIZED AS THE EYE WILL MAKE LANDFALL AT LOW TIDE. THE HIGHEST SURGE WILL BE ON THE COAST OF BRUNSWICK...NEW HANOVER AND PENDER COUNTIES.

...TORNADO AND FLASH FLOOD WATCHES ARE IN EFFECT THROUGH TONIGHT. FREQUENT HEAVY SQUALLS...CIRCULATING AROUND HURRICANE FRAN WILL INCREASE THE RAINFALL POTENTIAL WITH AMOUNTS OF 5 TO 10 INCHES POSSIBLE AND LOCALIZED FLOODING IS LIKELY; DOPPLER RADAR SHOWS RAINFALL ACCUMULATIONS BETWEEN 3 AND 6 INCHES IN THE PAST 3 HOURS IN THE COASTAL COUNTIES OF NORTH CAROLINA...AND UP TO 3 INCHES ACROSS INLAND COUNTIES.

TORNADOES ASSOCIATED WITH THE CONVECTIVE RAINBANDS ARE ALSO POSSIBLE THROUGH TONIGHT.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON THIS DANGEROUS WEATHER SITUATION CAN BE FOUND IN SHORT TERM FORECASTS AND PUBLIC INFORMATION STATEMENTS ISSUED BY THIS OFFICE. SHORT TERM FORECASTS ARE BEING ISSUED HOURLY...WITH THE EYE POSITION INCLUDED.

THE NEXT SCHEDULED STATEMENT FROM THIS OFFICE WILL BE ISSUED AROUND 9 PM.