Another active hurricane season is expected in the Atlantic this year. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, NOAA, is predicting 12-15 named storms, 7-9 hurricanes, and 3-5 major hurricanes with sustained winds over 110 mph. The most active hurricane months in eastern North Carolina are in August, September, and October. Increased tropical cyclone activity in the Atlantic hurricane basin runs in cycles, which usually lasts for two to three decades. This is primarily related to above normal water temperatures in the Atlantic Ocean. We have been in an active hurricane period since 1995. Many hurricanes affected NC during the previous active hurricane period which began in the 1940s and lasted through the mid 1960s. Three hurricanes made landfall in eastern NC within a six week period during the summer of 1955, Connie, Dianne, and Ione. The 10 year period from 1995 through 2004 has been the most active on record with an annual average of 14 named storms, 8 hurricanes, and 4 major hurricanes. Since records began, the long-term annual average is 10 named storms, 6 hurricanes, and 2 major hurricanes. History has shown that we’re definitely more vulnerable during these active hurricane periods. The best thing eastern NC residents can do is to be prepared. Have a plan of action in place and a disaster supplies kit. Listen and heed the advice of the National Weather Service, media, Emergency Management officials, and local elected officials during times of a hurricane threat.
KNOW WHICH WAY TO GO!
On May 1, NOAA introduced a smart new way to easily monitor specific tropical storms and hurricanes...directly from your desktop! *NOAA Storm Tracker* will contain live links to advisories, tracking maps and high resolution satellite images of any storm projected to strike the U.S. or any nation in the storm’s path. It will also contain National Weather Service Doppler radar imagery, data from ocean buoys and affected airports. *NOAA Storm Tracker* is designed to open in a new browser window, which can be resized and placed anywhere on your computer desktop (see example at right). The live links in the Storm Tracker window will update automatically without having to “refresh” or “reload” the browser window. To use this exciting new tool, go to: [www.stormtracker.noaa.gov](http://www.stormtracker.noaa.gov).

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**IN THE EYE OF THE STORM!  BY WAYNE SHAFFER**

Here are some safety tips for when the eye of the storm is in the area.

All people should be on high ground and inside a sturdy structure (not in mobile homes). The safest place in a building is usually on the lowest floor. Stay on the downwind side of the building or seek refuge in small interior rooms or hallways. Stay away from windows.

Persistent high winds and potentially lethal wind blown debris pose considerable danger in hurricanes. Nobody should be outside, PERIOD!!! You and your family are at great risk should you abandon your shelter. Roadways may be blocked by high water, fallen trees and other debris. Live power lines may also be down on the ground and dangling from utility poles. Do not leave your place of shelter until the storm has passed.

Within the eye of a hurricane the winds are light. However, this oasis of calm air is encircled by destructive and deadly hurricane force winds rotating in a counterclockwise direction. Should the eye of the hurricane pass directly over your location, the winds will often shift to the opposite direction, following a short period of relative calm.

Do not go far from your place of shelter when the eye of the hurricane is overhead. Make temporary emergency repairs as necessary and be ready to get back indoors as soon as the wind starts increasing. Be alert to all types of hazards littering the ground and dangling from buildings, trees, and utility poles. Assume all wires are live.

The light winds in the eye will only last for about a half hour or less, and if you are near the edge of the eye the winds will only diminish for a few minutes. So act quickly, and stay in sight of your place of shelter.

Continue to monitor the progress of the hurricane and pay special attention to later statements from the National Weather Service Office in Newport about when the storm might finally subside in your area.

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NOAA STORM TRACKER  BY HAL AUSTIN

Details of the hurricane’s eye structure
NEW SKYWARN WEBPAGE  BY HAL AUSTIN

Skywarn in eastern North Carolina has a new home on the web. If you haven’t seen it yet, you should! Eric Christensen KF4OTN has created a Skywarn website for the National Weather Service Newport forecast area that is packed with lots of great information. There’s something there for everyone: storm spotters, emergency managers and amateur radio operators. Check out the links to spotter training, guides, weather data, dates for upcoming spotter training and much more. The address is: www.mhxskywarn.org. From the NWS Newport website, www.erh.noaa.gov/mhx simply click on “SKYWARN Spotters” on the left-hand side.
EVACUATION SAFETY TIPS  
BY WAYNE SHAFFER

Make sure that all family members not at home know where you are going. Move valuable items that you cannot take with you to higher points within your home.

Protect your property as best you can and then complete your checklist.
1. Turn off propane tanks, water, and electricity.
2. Lock windows and doors.
3. Know where you are going. Leave early.
4. Make sure you have a motel reservation if that is where you are headed.
5. Make sure you have warm and protective clothing for all family members.
6. Remember to bring along a first aid kit, bottled water, canned or dried food, can opener, spoons, extra family medication and prescriptions, cash, spare glasses, hearing aid batteries, and the like.

Travel trips...
1. Don’t drive farther than necessary.
2. Take familiar routes.
3. Travel in daylight.
4. Make sure you have a full tank of gas.
5. Leave well before the onset of tropical storm force winds (39 mph) and heavy rain, and especially before the advancing storm surge can cut off your escape route.

Going to a shelter...
1. First consider staying with friends or family, next consider going to a motel, and lastly consider going to a shelter.
2. Take along blankets, sleeping bags, flashlights, special dietary foods, infant needs, and lightweight folding chairs.
3. Make sure that you register every person arriving with you at the shelter.
4. Remember that alcoholic beverages, and weapons are not allowed at evacuation shelters. Most shelters do not allow pets.

Important Papers...
1. Driver’s license and other identification.
2. Insurance policies.
3. Property inventory lists.
4. Special medical information.
5. Maps to your destination.

Leaving a home that you may never see again can be very unsettling. Be sensitive to the feelings of other family members and show compassion to those whose unusual behavior may reflect heartfelt loss.
If you observe severe weather, we want to hear from you! Please call us at:

1-800-889-6889