

## NOAA PRESS RELEASE:

The Atlantic basin is expected to see an above-normal hurricane season this year, according to the seasonal outlook issued by NOAA's Climate Prediction Center - a division of the National Weather Service.

Across the entire Atlantic Basin for the six-month season, which begins June 1, NOAA is predicting the following ranges this year:

- 12 to 18 named storms (winds of 39 mph or higher), of which:
- 6 to 10 could become hurricanes (winds of 74 mph or higher), including:
- 3 to 6 major hurricanes (Category 3, 4 or 5; winds of 111 mph or higher)

Each of these ranges has a 70 percent likelihood, and indicate that activity will exceed the seasonal average of 11 named storms, six hurricanes and two major hurricanes.

"The United States was fortunate last year. Winds steered most of the season's tropical storms and all hurricanes away from our coastlines," said Jane Lubchenco, Ph.D., undersecretary of commerce for oceans and atmosphere and NOAA administrator. "However we can't count on luck to get us through this season. We need to be prepared, especially with this above-normal outlook."

Climate factors considered for this outlook are:

- The continuing high activity era. Since 1995, the tropical multi-decadal signal has brought ocean and atmospheric conditions conducive for development in sync, leading to more active Atlantic hurricane seasons.
- Warm Atlantic Ocean water. Sea surface temperatures where storms often develop and move across the Atlantic are up to two degrees Fahrenheit warmer-than-average.
- La Niña, which continues to weaken in the equatorial Pacific Ocean, is expected to dissipate later this month or in June, but its impacts such as reduced wind shear are expected to continue into the hurricane season.

"In addition to multiple climate factors, seasonal climate models also indicate an above-normal season is likely, and even suggest we could see activity comparable to some of the active seasons since 1995," said Gerry Bell, Ph.D., lead seasonal hurricane forecaster at NOAA's Climate Prediction Center.

NOAA's seasonal hurricane outlook does not predict where and when any of these storms may hit. Landfall is dictated by weather patterns in place at the time the storm approaches. For each storm, NOAA's National Hurricane Center forecasts how these weather patterns affect the storm track, intensity and landfall potential.

"The tornadoes that devastated the South and the large amount of flooding we've seen this spring should serve as a reminder that disasters can happen anytime and anywhere. As we move into this hurricane season it's important to remember that FEMA is just part of an emergency management team that includes the entire federal family, state, local and tribal governments, the private sector and most importantly the public," said FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate.

"Now is the time, if you haven't already, to get your plan together for what you and your family would do if disaster strikes. Visit [ready.gov](http://ready.gov) to learn more. And if you're a small business owner, visit <http://www.ready.gov/business> to ensure that your business is prepared for a disaster," added Fugate.

Hurricane impacts are not limited to the coastline; strong winds and flooding rainfall often pose a threat across inland areas along with the risk for tornadoes.

Next week, May 22-28, is national Hurricane Preparedness Week. To help prepare residents of hurricane-prone areas, NOAA is unveiling a new set of video and audio public service announcements featuring NOAA hurricane experts and the FEMA administrator that are available in both English and Spanish. These are available at <http://www.hurricanes.gov/prepare>.



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