



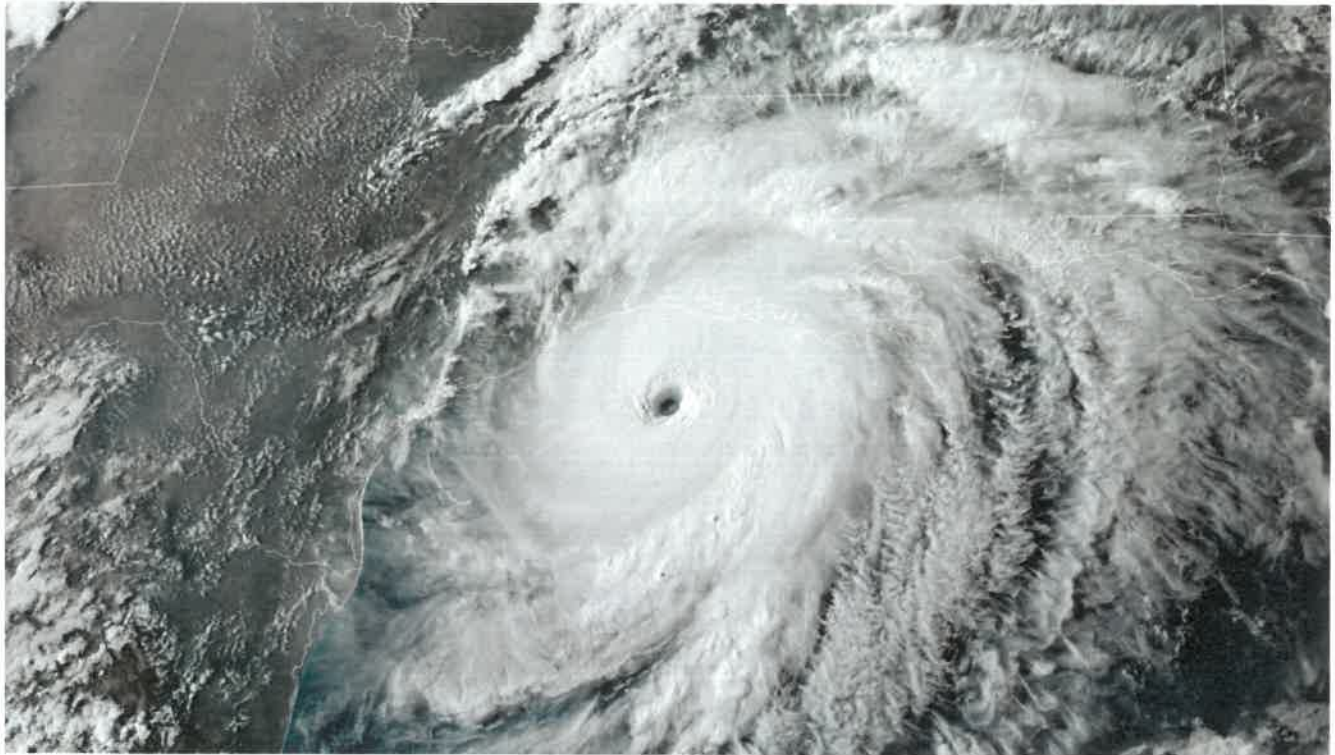
National Oceanic and
Atmospheric Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce

NOAA predicts another active Atlantic hurricane season

Focus areas: Weather, Climate

Topics: hurricane season, tropical cyclones, tropical storms

May 20, 2021 — NOAA's Climate Prediction Center is predicting another above-normal Atlantic hurricane season. Forecasters predict a 60% chance of an above-normal season, a 30% chance of a near-normal season, and a 10% chance of a below-normal season. However, experts do not anticipate the historic level of storm activity seen in 2020.

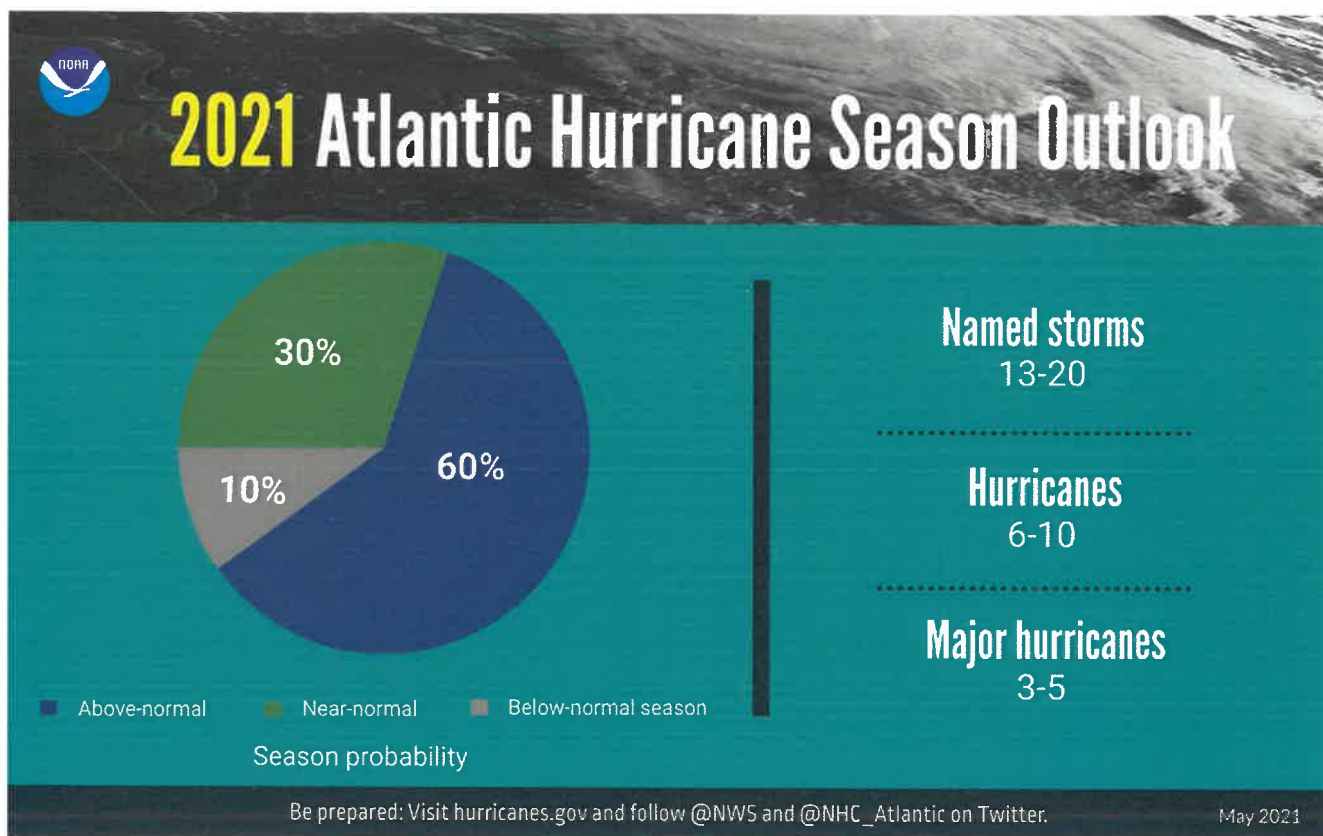


NOAA's GOES-East satellite captured this image of Hurricane Laura on August 26, 2020 as it approached the Gulf Coast. (NOAA)

[Download Image](#)

For 2021, a likely range of 13 to 20 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 5 major hurricanes (category 3, 4 or 5; with winds of 111 mph or higher) is expected. NOAA provides these ranges with a 70% confidence. The Atlantic hurricane season extends from June 1 through November 30.

“Now is the time for communities along the coastline as well as inland to get prepared for the dangers that hurricanes can bring,” said Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo. “The experts at NOAA are poised to deliver life-saving early warnings and forecasts to communities, which will also help minimize the economic impacts of storms.”




A summary infographic showing hurricane season probability and numbers of named storms predicted from NOAA's 2021 Atlantic Hurricane Season Outlook. (NOAA)

[Download Image](#)

[Download Image](#)

Last month, NOAA updated the statistics used to determine when hurricane seasons are above-, near-, or below-average relative to the latest climate record. Based on this update an average hurricane season produces 14 named storms, of which 7 become hurricanes, including 3 major hurricanes. [\[Watch this video summary of the Outlook.\]](#)

2021 Atlantic Hurricane Season Outlook



Highlights from NOAA's 2021 Atlantic Hurricane Season Outlook. A close-captioned version of this video can be viewed on the National Weather Service YouTube channel at <https://youtu.be/cU0lj4v-XA>.

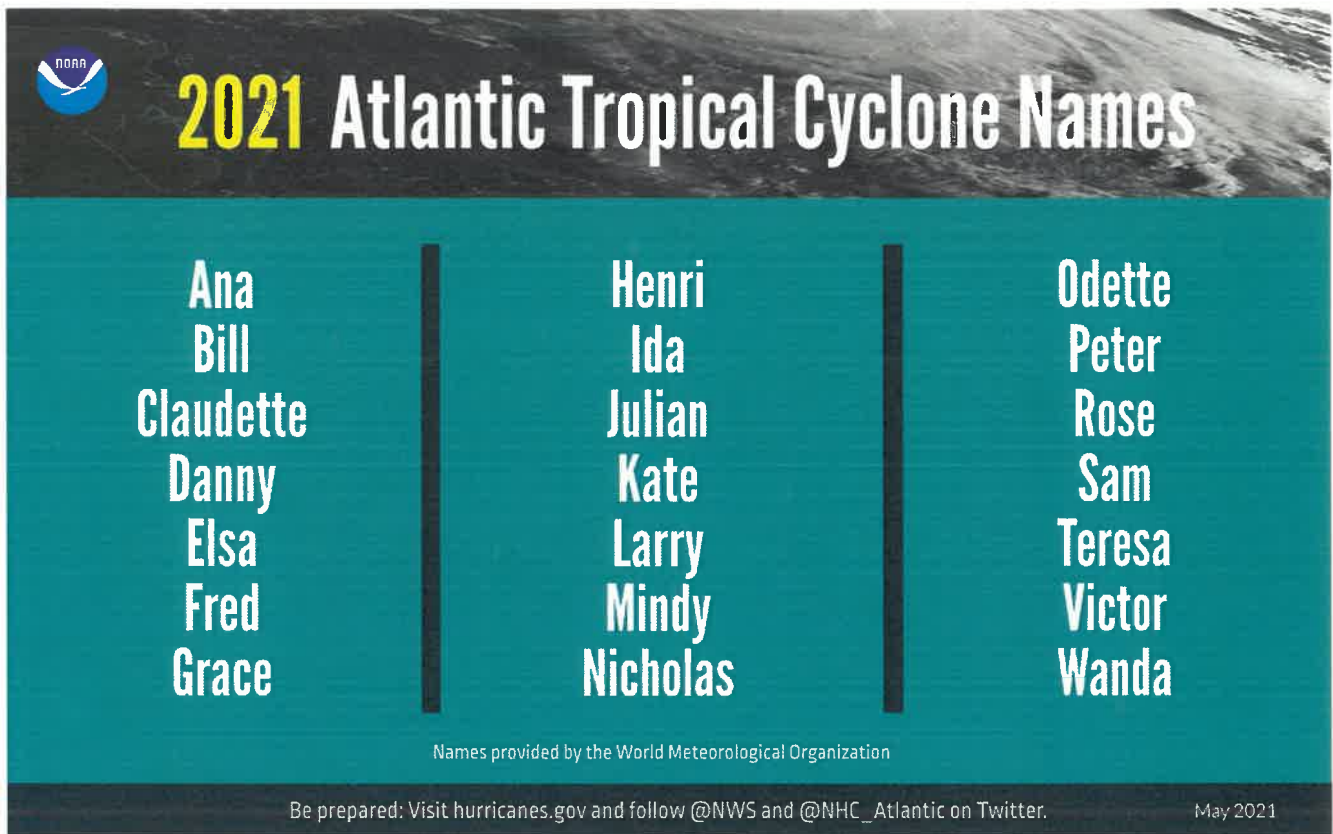
El Nino Southern Oscillation (ENSO) conditions are currently in the neutral phase, with the possibility of the return of La Nina later in the hurricane season. “ENSO-neutral and La Nina support the conditions associated with the ongoing high-activity era,” said Matthew Rosencrans, lead seasonal hurricane forecaster at [NOAA’s Climate Prediction Center](#). “Predicted warmer-than-average sea surface temperatures in the tropical Atlantic Ocean and Caribbean Sea, weaker tropical Atlantic trade winds, and an enhanced west African monsoon will likely be factors in this year’s overall activity.” [Scientists at NOAA also continue to study how climate change is impacting the strength and frequency of tropical cyclones.](#)

“Although NOAA scientists don’t expect this season to be as busy as last year, it only takes one storm to devastate a community,” said Ben Friedman, acting NOAA administrator. “The forecasters at the National Hurricane Center are well-prepared with significant upgrades to our computer models, emerging observation techniques, and the expertise to deliver the life-saving forecasts that we all depend on during this, and every, hurricane season.”

In an effort to continuously enhance hurricane forecasting, NOAA made several updates to products and services that will improve hurricane forecasting during the 2021 season.

- In March, NOAA upgraded the flagship Global Forecast System (GFS) to improve hurricane genesis forecasting and coupled GFS with a wave model extending ocean wave forecasts from 10 days out to 16 days. Additionally, Global Positioning Satellite Radio Occultation (GPS-RO) data are now included in the GFS model, providing an additional source of observations to strengthen overall model performance.
- Forecasters at the National Hurricane Center are now using an upgraded probabilistic storm surge model — known as P-Surge — which includes improved tropical cyclone wind structure and storm size information that offers better predictability and accuracy. This upgrade extends the lead time of P-Surge forecast guidance from 48 to 60 hours in situations where there is high confidence.
- NOAA's Atlantic Oceanographic and Meteorological Laboratory will deploy its largest array of air and water uncrewed systems to gather data designed to help improve hurricane intensity forecasts and forecast models. New drones will be launched from NOAA Hurricane Hunter aircraft that will fly into the lower part of hurricanes, and in the ocean, saildrones, hurricane gliders, global drifters, and air-deployable technology — called ALAMO floats — will track various parts of the life cycle of tropical storms.

Last year's record-breaking season serves as a reminder to all residents in coastal regions or areas prone to inland flooding from rainfall to be prepared for the 2021 hurricane season.



A summary graphic showing an alphabetical list of the 2021 Atlantic tropical cyclone names as selected by the World Meteorological Organization. The first named storm of the season. The official start of the Atlantic hurricane season is June 1 and runs through November 30. (NOAA)

[Download Image](#)

[Download Image](#)

"With hurricane season starting on June 1, now is the time to get ready and advance disaster resilience in our communities," said FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell. "Visit [Ready.gov](https://www.ready.gov) and [Listo.gov](https://www.listo.gov) to learn and take the steps to prepare yourself and others in your household. Download the [FEMA app](#) to sign-up for a variety of alerts and to access preparedness information. Purchase [flood insurance](#) to protect your greatest asset, your home. And, please encourage your neighbors, friends and coworkers to also [get ready for the upcoming season.](#)"

NOAA also issued seasonal hurricane outlooks for the [Eastern](#) and [Central Pacific](#) basins, and will provide an update to the Atlantic outlook in early August, just prior to the peak of the season.

Visit FEMA's [Ready.gov](https://www.fema.gov) to be prepared for the start of hurricane season and the National Hurricane Center's website at [hurricanes.gov](https://www.hurricanes.gov) throughout the season to stay current on watches and warnings.

Media contact

Lauren Gaches, lauren.gaches@noaa.gov, (202) 740-8314

Last updated May 20, 2021

Natural Disasters, Severe Weather, and COVID-19

Know how the COVID-19 pandemic can affect disaster preparedness and recovery, and what you can do to keep yourself and others safe.

Hurricanes, Severe Storms, and COVID-19



Planning for hurricane season and other potential disasters can be stressful, and because the 2021 hurricane season comes during the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, it may be especially so.

Public health and emergency response professionals have advice to help you safely prepare, evacuate, and shelter for severe storms while protecting yourself and others from COVID-19. Here are some tips to help you and your family stay safe during hurricane season this year.

Prepare for hurricane season

- Understand that your planning may be different this year because of the need to protect yourself and others from COVID-19.
- Get a **COVID-19 vaccine** as soon as you can. **COVID-19 vaccines** help protect you from getting sick or severely ill with COVID-19 and may also help protect people around you.
- Give yourself more time than usual to **prepare your emergency food, water, and medicine supplies**. Home delivery is the safest choice for buying disaster supplies; however, that may not be an option for everyone. If in-person shopping is your only choice, take steps to **protect your and others' health when running essential errands**.
- Protect yourself and others when filling **prescriptions** by limiting in-person visits to the pharmacy. Sign up for mail order delivery or call in your prescription ahead of time and use drive-through windows or curbside pickup, if available.
- Pay attention to local guidance about updated plans for evacuations and shelters, including **shelters for your pets**.
- When you check on neighbors and friends, be sure to follow **physical distancing** recommendations (staying at least 6 feet from others) and other **CDC recommendations** to protect yourself and others.

Prepare to evacuate

- If you may need to evacuate, prepare a "go kit" with **personal items** you cannot do without during an emergency. Include items that can help protect you and others from COVID-19, such as hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol, bar or liquid soap, disinfectant wipes (if available) and multiple, clean masks for everyone age 2 or older. Masks should have two or more layers and fit snugly against your face. They should not be used by people having trouble

breathing, or who are unconscious, incapacitated, or unable to remove the mask without assistance.

- Know a safe place to shelter and have several ways to receive weather alerts, such as National Weather Service cell phone alerts [☑](#) , NOAA Weather Radio [☑](#) , or (@NWS) Twitter alerts.
- Find out if your local public shelter is open, in case you need to evacuate your home and go there. Your shelter location may be different this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- If you need to go to a disaster shelter, follow CDC recommendations for staying safe and healthy in a public disaster shelter during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Follow guidance from your local public health or emergency management officials on when and where to shelter.
- Make a plan and prepare a disaster kit for your pets. Find out if your disaster shelter will accept pets. Typically, when shelters accommodate pets, the pets are housed in a separate area from people.
- Follow safety precautions when using transportation to evacuate. If you have to travel away from your community to evacuate, follow safety precautions for travelers to protect yourself and others from COVID-19.

Staying with friends or family

If you will be staying with friends or family outside your household to evacuate from the storm:




- Talk to the people you plan to stay with about how you can all best protect yourselves from COVID-19.
- Consider if either of your households has someone who is at **higher risk of developing severe illness from COVID-19**, including older adults or people of any age who have underlying medical conditions. Make sure everyone knows what they can do to keep them safe from COVID-19.
- Follow **everyday preventive actions**, including covering coughs and sneezes, washing your hands often, and avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands. Consider taking extra **precautions for people living in close quarters**.
- Know what to do if someone in your family or in the household you are staying with becomes sick with COVID-19. Take steps to keep your pets safe.

Stay safe after a hurricane

In addition to following guidance for staying safe and healthy **after a hurricane**, note that:

- You should continue to follow **preventive actions** to protect yourself and others from COVID-19, like washing your hands and wearing a mask during cleanup or when returning home.
- It may take longer than usual to restore power and water if they are out. Take steps to **prevent carbon monoxide poisoning** if you use a generator.
- If you are injured or ill, contact your medical provider for treatment recommendations. **Keep wounds clean** to prevent infection. Remember, **accessing medical care** may be more difficult than usual during the pandemic.
- Dealing with disasters can cause stress and strong emotions, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is natural to feel anxiety, grief, and worry. **Coping with these feelings and getting help** when you need it will help you, your family, and your community recover.
- People with preexisting mental health conditions should continue with their treatment and be aware of new or worsening symptoms. Additional information can be found at the **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration** [☑](#) page.
- After a hurricane, it's not unusual for rats, mice, and other pests to try to get into your home or building. Be aware that with restaurant and commercial closures related to COVID-19, there may be increased rodent activity as they try to seek other sources of food. Follow recommendations for **keeping pests out of your home**.

For more information

- [CDC: Coronavirus Disease 2019](#)
- [CDC: Prepare your health for the 2020 hurricane season](#)
- [National Weather Service: Prepare for Hurricane Season 2021](#) 
- [Ready.gov: hurricanes](#) 
- [Public Health Emergency Resources from the Dept. of Health and Human Services](#) 

Page last reviewed: May 25, 2021