

Saffir/Simpson Hurricane Scale

This scale can be used to give an estimate of the potential property damage and flooding expected along the coast with a hurricane. Persons residing or visiting southeast Louisiana during storm season (July through November) should familiarize themselves with these terms:

HURRICANE CATEGORIES

CATEGORY	EFFECTS
Category 1	<p>74-95 mph or 64-82 kt or 119-153 km/hr sustained winds</p> <p>4-5' surge; 980+ mbar pressure</p> <p>No real damage to building structures. Damage primarily to unanchored mobile homes, shrubbery, and trees. Also, some coastal flooding and minor pier damage. Some damage to poorly constructed signs.</p>
Category 2	<p>96-110 mph or 83-95 kt or 154-177 km/hr sustained winds</p> <p>6-8' surge; 965-979 mbar pressure</p> <p>Some roofing material, door, and window damage. Considerable damage to vegetation, mobile homes, poorly constructed signs, piers and small craft in unprotected moorings may break their moorings. Some trees down. Coastal and low-lying escape routes flood 2-4 hours before arrival of the hurricane center.</p>
Category 3	<p>111-130 mph or 96-113 kt or 178-209 km/hr sustained winds</p> <p>9-12' surge; 945-964 mbar pressure</p> <p>Some structural damage to small residences and utility buildings, with a minor amount of curtain wall failures. Mobile homes and poorly constructed signs are destroyed. Flooding near the coast destroys smaller structures with larger structures damaged by floating debris. Terrain may be flooded well inland. Damage to shrubbery and trees with foliage blown off trees and large trees blown down. Low-lying escape routes are cut by rising water 3-5 hours before arrival of the center of the hurricane. Terrain continuously lower than 5 ft above mean sea level may be flooded inland 8 miles (13 km) or more. Evacuation of low-lying residences with several blocks of the shoreline may be required.</p>

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:
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CATEGORY	EFFECTS
Category 4	<p>131-155 mph or 114-135 kt or 210-249 km/hr sustained winds</p> <p>13-18' surge; 920-944 mbar</p> <p>More extensive wall failures with some complete roof structure failure on small residences. Major erosion of beach areas. Terrain may be flooded well inland. Shrubs, trees, and all signs are blown down. Complete destruction of mobile homes. Extensive damage to doors and windows. Low-lying escape routes may be cut by rising water 3-5 hours before arrival of the center of the hurricane. Major damage to lower floors of structures near the shore. Terrain lower than 10 feet above sea level may be flooded requiring massive evacuation of residential areas as far inland as 6 miles (10 km).</p>
Category 5	<p>155 mph+ winds or 135+ knots or 249+ km/hr sustained winds.</p> <p>18+ foot storm surge; 920 mbar</p> <p>Complete roof failure on many residences and industrial buildings. Some complete building failures with small utility buildings blown over or away. Flooding causes major damage to lower floors of all structures near the shoreline. Massive evacuation of residential areas may be required. All shrubs, trees, and signs blown down. Complete destruction of mobile homes. Severe and extensive window and door damage. Low-lying escape routes are cut by rising water 3-5 hours before arrival of the center of the hurricane. Major damage to lower floors of all structures located less than 15 feet above sea level and within 500 yards of the shoreline. Massive evacuation of residential areas on low ground within 5-10 miles (8-16 km) of the shoreline may be required.</p>

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