

Hurricane Irene safety tips on Twitter

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Heavy surf from Hurricane Irene enters the beach parking lot in Ocean City, Maryland. The state of Maryland has declared a state of emergency with Hurricane Irene making landfall in North Carolina moving up the east coast of the United States.

A Twitter account with the handle @irene is pouring out a stream of tips on how to stay safe as Hurricane Irene batters the United States east coast.

The @irene account, which has more than 8,600 [followers](#), is also forwarding messages from the US [Federal Emergency Management Agency](#) (FEMA), New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg and others.

"There are 78 hurricane shelters and 8 special medical centers across the city. There is plenty of room. No one will be turned away," @mikebloomberg said.

"Turn fridge/freezer to coldest temp & group food together, this helps food stay cold longer if power goes out," advised FEMA.

According to The Wall Street Journal the @irene account belongs to Irene Tien, a 28-year-old New York woman who was convinced by her colleagues at a digital media firm to lend her handle to the hurricane moving up the US East Coast.

Tien told the newspaper she was initially reluctant because "it's a hurricane, it's sensitive, it's potentially dangerous and horrible."

She was eventually, persuaded, however, and co-workers in New York are posting the tweets while Tien enjoys a weekend on the other side of the country in Los Angeles.

Along with useful information, the account also posts the occasional joke.

"My first time in Kitty Hawk!" @irene said when the [hurricane](#) touched down in the North Carolina town famed as the site of the first powered flight. "Where's the Wright Bros. museum?"

As for Cape Lookout, also in North Carolina, @irene said it "doesn't look anything like the brochure my travel agent gave me but still a very charming town."

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