

Hawaii bracing for first hurricane in 22 years

August 8 2014, by Jennifer Sinco Kelleher



This Aug. 5, 2014 satellite image provided by NASA shows two tropical Pacific Ocean hurricanes - Iselle at center and Julio at right - bearing down on Hawaii, top left. Hurricane Iselle is expected to reach Hawaii Thursday night, Aug. 7, 2014. Tracking close behind it is Hurricane Julio, which strengthened early Thursday into a Category 2 storm. (AP Photo/NASA)

Hurricane Iselle's outer edges brought rain and wind to Hawaii on Thursday as it was poised to become the first hurricane or tropical storm to hit the island chain in 22 years. Another hurricane closely followed.

Iselle was expected to pass overnight across the Big Island, one of the least populated islands, then send rain and [high winds](#) to the rest of the state on Friday.

"We're primarily urging residents to still take proper precautions to prepare themselves to keep everyone safe," National Weather Service meteorologist Eric Lau said.

Hundreds of people flowed into emergency shelters as some communities lost power.

Hurricane Julio strengthened into a Category 3 storm and followed Iselle's path with sustained maximum winds of 115 mph (185 kph). It was about 1,000 miles (1,600 kilometers) behind Iselle and projected to head just north of the islands sometime early Sunday.

Hawaii has been directly hit by hurricanes only three times since 1950. The last time Hawaii was hit with a [hurricane](#) or tropical storm was in 1992, when Hurricane Iniki killed six people and destroyed more than 1,400 homes, Lau said.

Hawaii Gov. Neil Abercrombie said the state is prepared for the back-to-back storms.

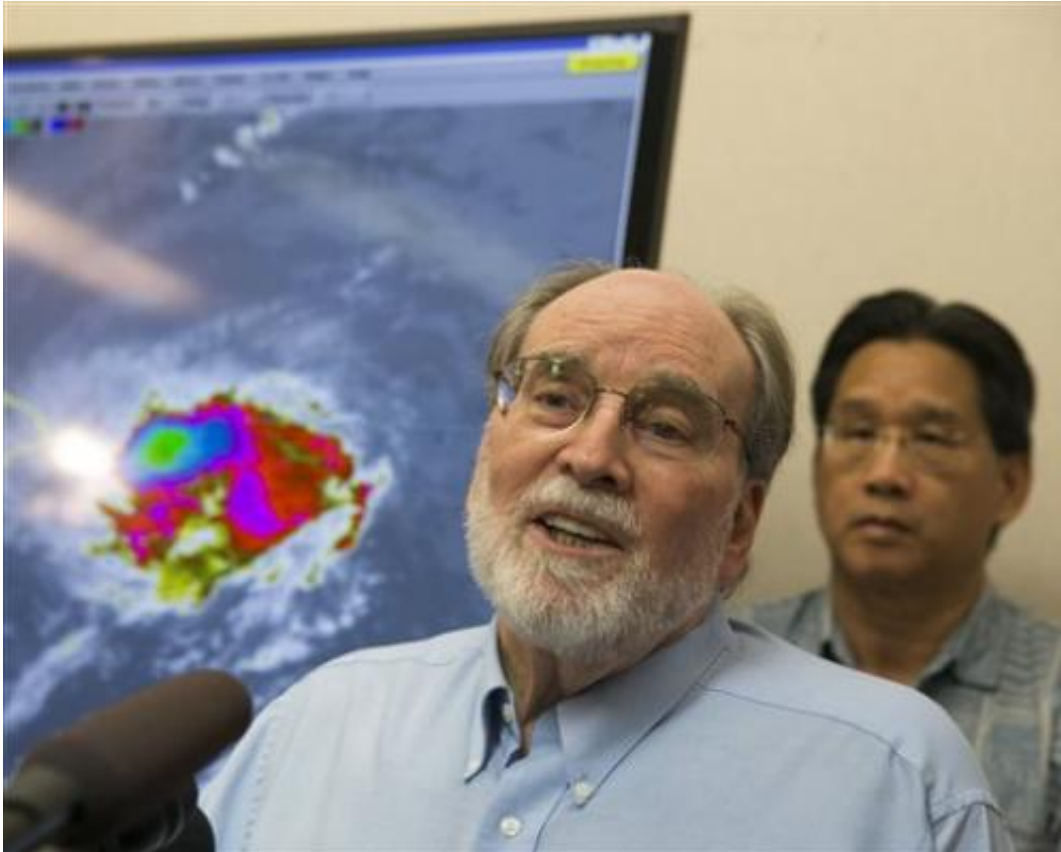
At least 30 flights were canceled Thursday from several airlines, the Hawaii Tourism Authority said.

As residents prepared, a 4.5-magnitude earthquake struck the Big Island but didn't cause major damage. There were no reports of injuries.



Staff members of the Royal Kona Resort in Kailua, Hawaii take down umbrellas as the resort prepares for Hurricane Iselle on Thursday, Aug. 7, 2014. Hurricane Iselle is expected to arrive on the Big Island on Thursday evening, bringing heavy rains, winds gusting up to 85 mph and flooding in some areas. Weather officials changed their outlook on the system Wednesday after seeing it get a little stronger, giving it enough oomph to stay a hurricane as it reaches landfall. (AP Photo/Chris Stewart)

The storms are rare but not unexpected in years with a developing El Nino, a change in ocean temperature that affects weather around the world.



Hawaii Gov. Neil Abercrombie, center, speaks at the National Weather Service office on the campus of the University of Hawaii, Thursday, Aug. 7, 2014, in Honolulu. Hawaii is bracing for both Hurricane Iselle and Julio which are on course to hit the Hawaiian Islands. (AP Photo/Marco Garcia)

Ahead of this year's [hurricane season](#), weather officials warned that the wide swath of the Pacific Ocean that includes Hawaii could see four to seven [tropical storms](#) this year.

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