

Irma forecast to remain a 'powerful hurricane for days'

September 1 2017



Hurricane Irma is forecast to reach the Caribbean on Tuesday

Hurricane Irma in the central Atlantic is expected to remain a "powerful hurricane" as it heads towards the Caribbean, US weather monitors said Friday.

Irma, a Category 2 storm, formed just days after the first major [hurricane](#) of the Atlantic season, Harvey, unleashed massive rain and

floods over Texas.

The hurricane is packing winds of 110 miles (175 kilometers) per hour, and is moving west at a speed of 13 miles per hour.

Irma is swirling in the mid-Atlantic some 1,580 miles east of the Leeward Islands, the Miami-based National Hurricane Center said at 1500 GMT.

Its tropical storm-strength winds extend outward up to 90 miles—meaning these [strong winds](#) have already reached Puerto Rico and the Antilles Islands.

The storm reached powerful Category 3 status on the five-level Saffir-Simpson scale Thursday when its winds were clocked at 115 miles per hour.

"Irma is forecast to remain a [powerful hurricane](#) for days," the NHC said, adding that strength fluctuations "are possible" over the weekend.

The hurricane's center is forecast to reach the Lesser Antilles islands on Tuesday.

South Florida meteorologist Craig Setzer said it was too early to tell if the storm would impact Florida or the Gulf of Mexico region.

Anxiety is running high over the risk of another storm in the southern United States after Harvey pounded the Texas coast, making landfall last week as a Category Four hurricane.

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