

Hurricane Lane soaks Hawaii's Big Island with foot of rain

August 23 2018, by Jennifer Sinco Kelleher



Jay Kitashima lashes down the roof of his tiny home in preparation for Hurricane Lane, Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2018, along Ewa Beach in Honolulu. As emergency shelters opened, rain began to pour and cellphone alerts went out, the approaching hurricane started to feel real for Hawaii residents. (AP Photo/John Locher)

Hurricane Lane soaked Hawaii's Big Island on Thursday, dumping 12 inches of rain in as many hours as residents stocked up on supplies and tried to protect their homes ahead of the state's first hurricane since

1992.

The National Weather Service warned that some areas could see up to 30 inches (76 centimeters) before the system passes. Bands of rain extended 350 miles (566 kilometers) from the hurricane's center.

Lane was not projected to make direct hit on the islands, but officials warned that even a lesser blow could do significant harm.

"You do not need a direct strike to have major impacts from a hurricane this strong," said Steve Goldstein, a meteorologist at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in Washington.

The center of the Category 4 storm was predicted to move close to or over portions of the main islands later Thursday or Friday, bringing dangerous surf of 20 feet and a storm surge of up to 4 feet, forecasters said.

Tropical storm conditions, with winds of 73 mph (118 kph), were expected to reach the Big Island, Hawaii's easternmost major island, later Thursday, with hurricane conditions possible later in the day.

As of 8 a.m., the hurricane was 290 miles (466 kilometers) south of Honolulu and moving northwest at 7 mph. Maximum winds had weakened slightly to 130 mph, the National Weather Service said.



People, who declined to be named, fill up sand bags that will be used to help protect their home in preparation for Hurricane Lane, Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2018, along Ewa Beach in Honolulu. As emergency shelters opened, rain began to pour and cellphone alerts went out, the approaching hurricane started to feel real for Hawaii residents.(AP Photo/John Locher)

After passing the islands, the system was likely to turn to the west Saturday and Sunday and accelerate, forecasters said.

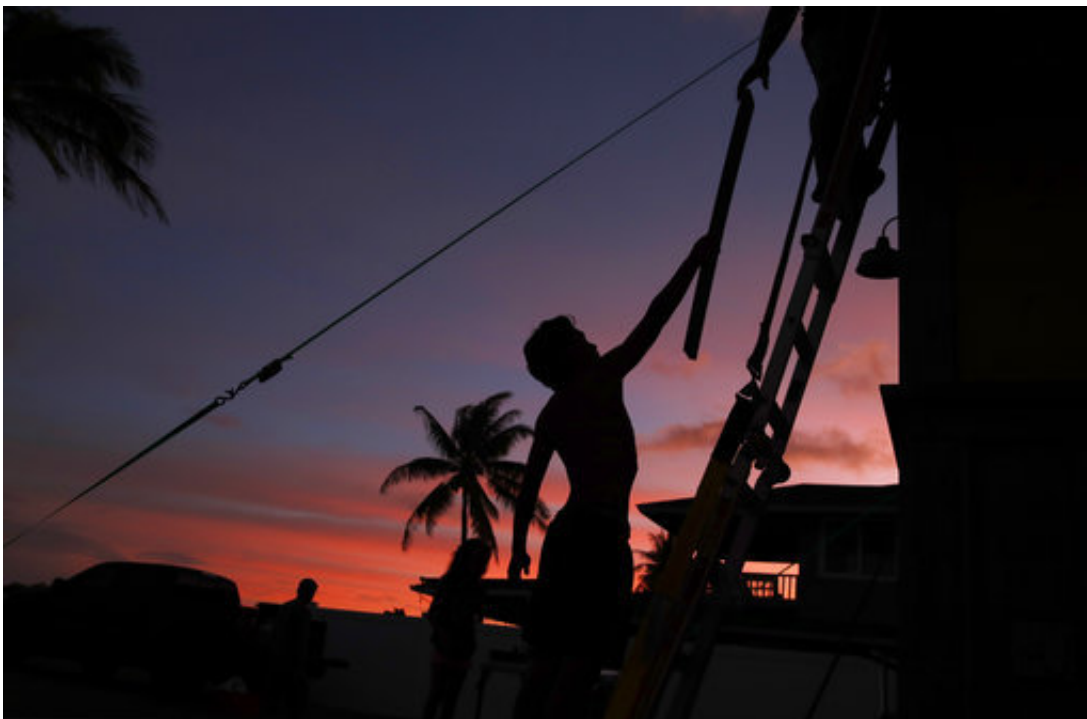
The arrival of the storm's outer bands made the threat seem more real.

"Everyone is starting to buckle down at this point," said Christyl Nagao of Kauai. "Our families are here. We have businesses and this and that. You just have to man your fort and hold on tight."

Shelters opened Wednesday on the Big Island and on the islands of Maui, Molokai and Lanai. Officials urged those needing the Molokai

shelter to get there soon because of concerns that the main highway on the island's south coast could become impassable.

On the island of Oahu, shelters were scheduled to open Thursday. Officials were also working to help Hawaii's sizeable homeless population, many of whom live near beaches and streams that could flood.



Kainalu Kitashima hands his father a piece of wood to help tie down their tiny home in preparation for Hurricane Lane, Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2018, along Ewa Beach in Honolulu. As emergency shelters opened, rain began to pour and cellphone alerts went out, the approaching hurricane started to feel real for Hawaii residents.(AP Photo/John Locher)

Hawaii Emergency Management Agency Administrator Tom Travis said there's not enough shelter space statewide and advised people who were

not in flood zones to stay home.

Authorities also warned that the shelters are not designed to withstand winds greater than about 40 mph (64 kph) and that for most people they should be a "last resort."

"Whenever possible, the public should plan to shelter in place or stay with family or friends in homes outside of these hazard areas that were designed, built or renovated to withstand anticipated conditions," the city and county of Honolulu said in a statement.

Melanie Davis, who lives in a Honolulu suburb, said she was gathering canned food and baby formula.

"We're getting some bags of rice and, of course, some Spam," she said of the canned lunchmeat that's popular in Hawaii.



A woman fills up her car as other vehicles line up behind her for gasoline at a Costco in preparation for Hurricane Lane, Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2018, in Kapolei, Hawaii. (AP Photo/John Locher)

She was organizing important documents into a folder—birth and marriage certificates, Social Security cards, insurance paperwork—and making sure her three children, all under 4, have flotation devices such as swimming vests "just in case."

Public schools were closed for the rest of the week, and local government workers were told to stay home unless they are essential employees.

The central Pacific gets fewer hurricanes than other regions, with about only four or five named storms a year. Hawaii rarely gets hit. The last major storm to hit was Iniki in 1992. Others have come close in recent years.

"We're planning on boarding up all our windows and sliding doors," Napua Puaoi of Wailuku, Maui, said after buying plywood from Home Depot. "As soon as my husband comes home—he has all the power tools."

Puaoi was 12 at the time of Hurricane Iniki.



With several monitor displaying hurricane information in several different languages behind them, two women sit at a desk inside a Waikiki hotel, Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2018, in Honolulu. Hurricane Lane has weakened as it approaches Hawaii but was still expected to pack a wallop, forecasters said Wednesday. (AP Photo/Marco Garcia)

"When it did happen, I just remember pandemonium. It was all-out craziness," she said.

Unlike Florida or Texas, where residents can get in their cars and drive hundreds of miles to safety, people in Hawaii are confined to the islands and must stay put. They have to make sure they have enough supplies to outlast prolonged power outages and other potential emergencies.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency has several barges packed with food, water, generators and other supplies that it moved into the region ahead of Hurricane Hector, which skirted past the islands more

than a week ago, according to FEMA Administrator Brock Long.

The U.S. Navy was moving ships and submarines out of Hawaii. All vessels not currently undergoing maintenance were being positioned to help respond after the storm, if needed.



Rudy Kok, left, and Mary Kok pull their dinghy out of the harbor to secure to their sailing boat in preparation of Hurricane Lane, Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2018, in Honolulu. Hurricane Lane has weakened as it approaches Hawaii but was still expected to pack a wallop, forecasters said Wednesday. The Koks double moored their boat hoping to keep it from sustaining any damage from the hurricane. (AP Photo/Marco Garcia)



A shopper walks past a monitor displaying hurricane information in several different languages inside a hotel Waikiki, Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2018, in Honolulu. Hurricane Lane has weakened as it approaches Hawaii but was still expected to pack a wallop, forecasters said Wednesday. (AP Photo/Marco Garcia)



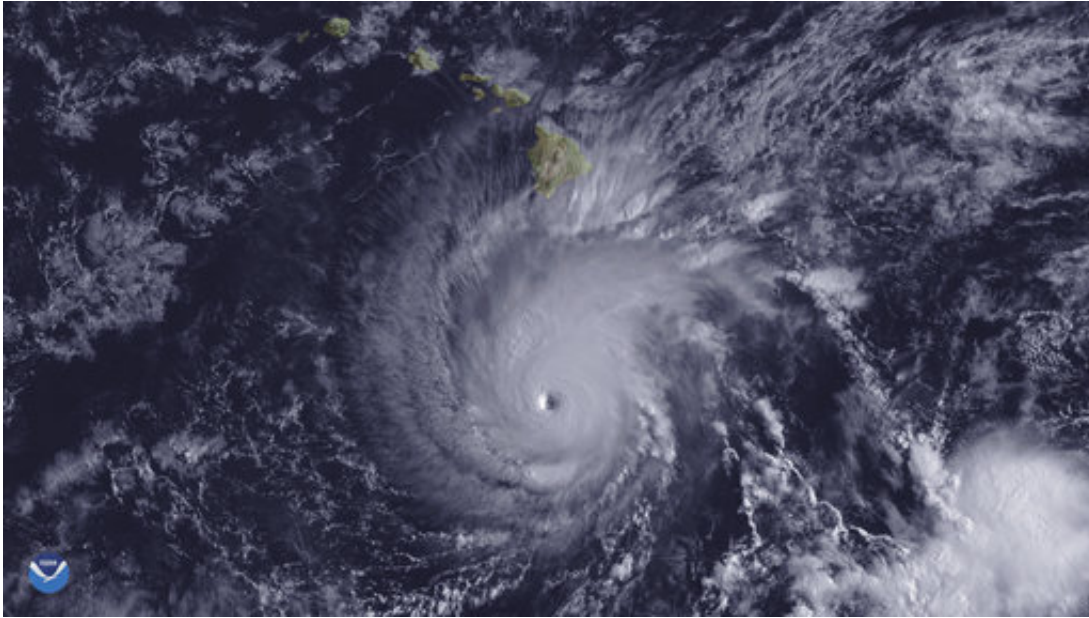
Beachgoers frolic on Waikiki Beach, Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2018, in Honolulu. Hurricane Lane has weakened as it approaches Hawaii but was still expected to pack a wallop, forecasters said Wednesday. (AP Photo/Marco Garcia)



Contractor David Meyer pushes a plywood board into place over a window in preparation of the approaching strong winds of Hurricane Lane, Wednesday, August 22, 2018, in Honolulu. Hurricane Lane has weakened as it approaches Hawaii but was still expected to pack a wallop, forecasters said Wednesday. Hawaii residents prepared for the hurricane by buying water, flashlights, propane and other emergency supplies. (AP Photo/Marco Garcia)



Contractor David Meyer, bottom, pushes a plywood board to Alecia Cone, left, and Craig Maromoto as they cover a window in preparation of the approaching strong winds expected from Hurricane Lane, Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2018, in Honolulu. Hurricane Lane has weakened as it approaches Hawaii but was still expected to pack a wallop, forecasters said Wednesday. Hawaii residents prepared for the hurricane by buying water, flashlights, propane and other emergency supplies. (AP Photo/Marco Garcia)



This Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2018 image provided by NOAA shows Hurricane Lane south of Hawaii. Hurricane Lane was forecast to continue its northwest turn into the islands Thursday. (NOAA via AP)

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