

Hurricane Michael reaches Category 2, threatens southern US

October 9 2018



Hurricane Michael, pictured in a satellite image taken on October 8, 2018, when it was still a tropical storm, could produce life-threatening flooding

Hurricane Michael strengthened to a Category 2 storm with 100-mile-per-hour winds on Tuesday as Florida's governor warned it could bring

"total devastation" to parts of the southern US state.

The storm—currently located over the Gulf of Mexico—is sweeping toward the Florida coast at around 12 miles per hour and is expected to make landfall on Wednesday, bringing with it "life threatening" storm surges and heavy rainfall, the National Hurricane Center said.

"It is a monstrous storm and the forecast (keeps) getting more dangerous," Florida Governor Rick Scott said. "The time to prepare is now."

It "poses a deadly threat and as it grows stronger, we can expect it make landfall as a major Category 3 storm," said Scott, warning that it "could bring total devastation to parts of our state, especially in the panhandle."

A [hurricane warning](#) was up across the Florida panhandle, a low-lying area of beachfront resort and retirement communities on northeastern Gulf coast.

Forecasters warned of coastal flooding with [storm surge](#) and tides projected to raise water levels by as much as eight to 12 feet in some areas.

'Another big one'

Rainfall of four to eight inches, and as much as a foot in isolated areas, "could lead to life-threatening flash floods," according to the NHC, which also warned that the [storm](#)'s approach could spawn tornados in northwestern Florida.



Hurricane Michael is expected to bring storm surges and heavy rainfall when it smashes into Florida midweek

Michael was forecast to have the power to uproot trees, block roads and knock out power for days by the time it hits Florida Wednesday. It is expected to weaken as it moves up into the southeastern United States.

President Donald Trump, who was in Orlando delivering an address on Monday to a global association of police chiefs, said the federal government was ready and urged residents to be prepared for the worst.

"Can you believe it? It looks like another big one," he said

The Carolinas are still recovering from Hurricane Florence, which left dozens dead and is estimated to have caused billions of dollars in damage last month.

It made landfall on the coast as a Category 1 [hurricane](#) on September 14 and drenched some parts of the state with 40 inches of rain.



Hurricane Michael comes less than a month after Hurricane Florence left dozens dead in the Carolinas

Last year saw a string of catastrophic storms batter the western Atlantic—including Irma, Maria and Hurricane Harvey—causing a record-equaling \$125 billion in damage when it flooded the Houston

metropolitan area.

Scientists have long warned that global warming will make cyclones more destructive, and some say the evidence for this may already be visible.

At their most fearsome, these low-pressure weather fronts pack more power than the energy released by the atomic bomb that levelled Hiroshima.

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Citation: Hurricane Michael reaches Category 2, threatens southern US (2018, October 9)
retrieved 10 April 2024 from

<https://phys.org/news/2018-10-hurricane-michael-category-threatens-southern.html>

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