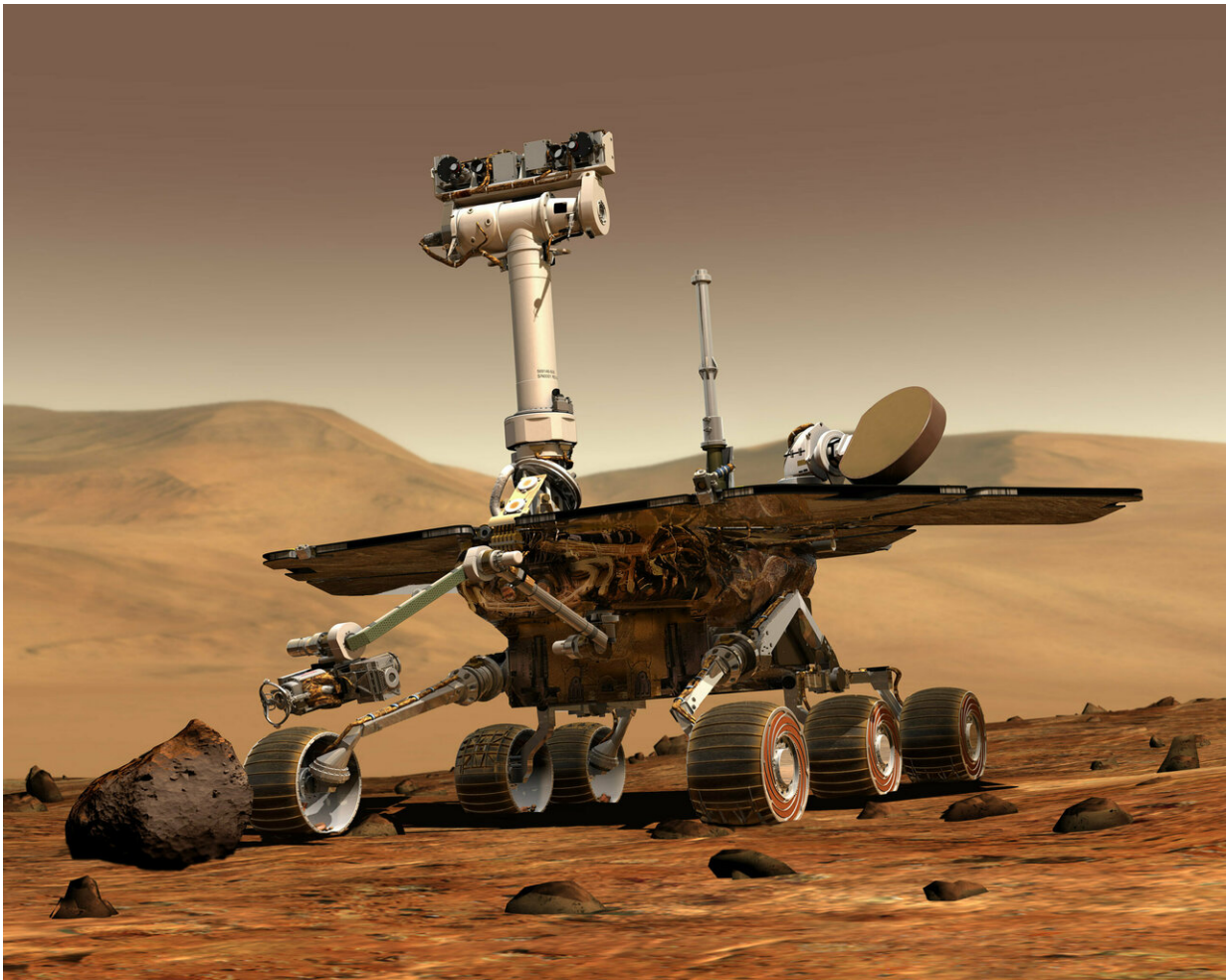


# NASA's storm-silenced rover marks 15th anniversary on Mars

January 24 2019, by Marcia Dunn

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This illustration made available by NASA shows the rover Opportunity on the surface of Mars. The exploratory vehicle landed on Jan. 24, 2004, and logged more than 28 miles (45 kilometers) before falling silent during a global dust storm June 2018. There was so much dust in the Martian atmosphere that sunlight could not reach Opportunity's solar panels for power generation. Credit:

NASA

NASA's Opportunity rover is silently marking the 15th anniversary of its touchdown on Mars.

The spacecraft hasn't been heard from since a [global dust storm](#) last June. The six wheeler—about the size of a golf cart—logged more than 28 miles (45 kilometers) on the red planet before falling silent. There was so much dust in the Martian atmosphere that sunlight could not reach Opportunity's solar panels to generate power.md

Flight controllers are still sending commands to the rover in hopes of a response. But project manager John Callas says the longer the blackout lasts, the less likely contact will be made. He calls Thursday's anniversary bittersweet.

Opportunity landed on Mars on Jan. 24, 2004. It already had long outlived its design lifetime before contact was lost.

**More information:**

[www.jpl.nasa.gov/news/news.php?release=2019-006](http://www.jpl.nasa.gov/news/news.php?release=2019-006)

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