

Hurricane Dorian howling over North Carolina's Outer Banks

September 6 2019, by Jeffrey Collins



Floodwaters swirl around a storm drain as heavy rain falls from Hurricane Dorian, Thursday, Sept. 5, 2019, in North Myrtle Beach, S.C. (Jason Lee/The Sun News via AP)

Dorian howled over North Carolina's Outer Banks on Friday, lashing the low-lying barrier islands as a weakened Category 1 hurricane.

A National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association weather station at Cape Lookout, located inside the western eyewall of Dorian, reported sustained hurricane-force winds of 74 mph (119 kmh), the National Hurricane Center reported early Friday. At 5 a.m. EDT, the agency said, Dorian's center was passing just east of Cape Lookout, the southernmost point on North Carolina's remote, 200-mile (320-kilometer) long string of [barrier islands](#) and spits.

Forecasters said large and destructive waves could reach nearly to the ceilings of one-story structures along the narrow strip of land, where many year-round residents were determined to ride out the storm.

Ann Warner, who owns Howard's Pub on Ocracoke Island, said people did what they could to prepare.

"The boats are tied down. Yards are cleaned up. Businesses are closed. People are hunkered down," Warner said by phone on Thursday.

She lives near the southern end of island chain, and said about half the 1,000 residents of Ocracoke stuck it out. Ferries stopped service on Wednesday, she said, so "If you want to change your mind, it's too late. We're on our own."



Kathy Desiderio took advantage of a calm between burst of rain to walk her dog Lily and survey the tornado damage at her neighbor's homes. A tornado touched down in the The Farm at Brunswick County in Carolina Shores, N.C. on Thursday, Sept. 5, 2019, damaging homes ahead of Hurricane Dorian's arrival. (Jason Lee/The Sun News via AP)

Further north, Virginia was also in harm's way, and a round of evacuations was ordered there.

The hurricane hammered the Bahamas with 185 mph (295 kph) winds, killing at least 30 people, but swept past Florida at a relatively safe distance, grazed Georgia, and then hugged the South Carolina-North Carolina coastline. At least four deaths in the Southeast have been blamed on the storm.

Twisters spun off by Dorian peeled away roofs and flipped trailers in South Carolina, and more than 250,000 homes and businesses were left without power. Dorian's winds weakened after sunset Thursday to 100 mph (161 kph), before falling further early Friday to 90 mph (145 kph), making it a Category 1 storm.

As of early Friday, Dorian was centered about 55 miles (90 kilometers) southwest of Cape Hatteras, and 25 miles (35 kilometers) east of Cape Lookout, North Carolina, in the southern Outer Banks, along which hurricane-force wind gusts were reported. The storm was moving northeast at 14 mph (22 kph). It's expected to remain a hurricane as it sweeps up the Eastern Seaboard on Saturday, lashing the New England shore with heavy surf.



A tornado touched down in the The Farm at Brunswick County in Carolina Shores, N.C. on Thursday, Sept. 5, 2019, damaging homes ahead of Hurricane Dorian's arrival. (Jason Lee/The Sun News via AP)

In coastal Wilmington, North Carolina, heavy rain fell horizontally, trees bent in the wind and traffic lights swayed as the hurricane drew near. As much as 15 inches (38 centimeters) of rain was forecast, with flash-flooding likely.

Overnight winds were expected to cause trees and branches to fall on power lines, and debris could block repair crews from accessing damaged lines, said Mike Burnette senior vice president of Electric Cooperatives, a utility provider in North Carolina. Customers should prepare for prolonged power outages, he said.

"We have a long night ahead of us. Everyone needs to stay in a safe place and off the roads until the storm passes," North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper said Thursday.

About 150 evacuees were camped out at Charlotte Motor Speedway in North Carolina, speedway spokesman Scott Cooper said.



Johnny Crawford navigates his kayak down a flooded street, Thursday, Sept. 5, 2019, in Charleston, S.C., following Hurricane Dorian. The downtown neighborhood is prone to floodwaters, even without a tropical weather event. (AP Photo/Meg Kinnard)

Leslie Lanier, 61, was one of those who decided to stay behind on Ocracoke Island. She boarded up her home and bookstore, making sure to move the volumes higher.

"I think we're in for a great big mess," she said.

Supporters of Republican Greg Murphy and Democrat Allen Thomas, the top candidates to replace the late Rep. Walter Jones Jr., in a special election on Tuesday, found themselves not campaigning, but pulling up

signs to keep them from becoming airborne missiles.

Dorian swamped roads in historic downtown of Charleston, South Carolina, and knocked down some 150 trees and toppled [power lines](#). Gusts had topped 80 mph (129 kph) in some areas. The port city of handsome antebellum homes sits on a peninsula that is prone to flooding even from ordinary storms.

Dorian apparently spawned at least one tornado in North Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, damaging several homes, and another twister touched down in the beach town of Emerald Isle, North Carolina, mangling and overturning several trailer homes in a jumble of sheet metal. No immediate injuries were reported.



A tornado touched down in the The Farm at Brunswick County in Carolina Shores, N.C., on Thursday, Sept. 5, 2019, damaging homes ahead of Hurricane Dorian's arrival. (Jason Lee/The Sun News via AP)



Residents of the Boardwalk RV Park discuss the path of a possible waterspout or tornado, generated by Hurricane Dorian, struck the area, Thursday, Sept. 5, 2019, in Emerald Isle, N.C. (Julia Wall/The News & Observer via AP)



Isle of Palms residents look at a downed tree on Hartnett Blvd. during Hurricane Dorian at the Isle of Palms, S.C., Thursday, Sept. 5, 2019, in Charleston, S.C. (AP Photo/Mic Smith)



Debris covers the ground including damage to Summerville High School's football stadium's goal post and signage after Hurricane Dorian passed by Thursday, Sept. 5, 2019, in Summerville, S.C. Dorian raked the Carolina coast with howling, window-rattling winds and sideways rain Thursday, spinning off tornadoes and knocking out power to more than 200,000 homes and businesses as it pushed northward toward the dangerously exposed Outer Banks. (AP Photo/Mic Smith)



Brennamae Cooper, right, cries and hugs a friend after finding themselves walking in opposite directions, one escaping the destruction of Hurricane Dorian and the other on the way to search for her relatives, on a shattered road near the town of High Rock, Grand Bahama, Bahamas, Thursday Sept. 5, 2019. (AP Photo / Ramon Espinosa)



Women cover their heads with palmetto leaves as they rest on the road, after the passage of Hurricane Dorian, near High Rock in Grand Bahama, Bahamas, Thursday, Sept. 5, 2019. The women are walking to the town of High Rock to look for their relatives. (AP Photo/Ramon Espinosa)

The four deaths attributed to the storm in the mainland U.S. took place in Florida and North Carolina. All of them involved men who died in falls or by electrocution while trimming trees, putting up storm shutters or otherwise getting ready for the hurricane.

Navy ships were ordered to ride out the [storm](#) at sea, and military aircraft were moved inland. More than 700 airline flights scheduled for Thursday and Friday were canceled. Hundreds of shelter animals were airlifted from coastal South Carolina to Delaware.

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