

# Hurricane Douglas within 'razor thin' distance of Hawaii

July 27 2020, by Audrey McAvoy

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Surfers take on large waves generated by Hurricane Douglas at Laie Beach Park, Sunday, July 26, 2020, in Laie, Hawaii. (AP Photo/Eugene Tanner)

Hurricane Douglas came within "razor thin" distance of the Hawaiian Islands but spared the state the worst of the strong winds, storm surge and flooding officials had warned about.

Meteorologists cautioned the hurricane's path could shift slightly and Douglas could still unload its destructive power on the islands of Oahu and Kauai.

"It's still not out of the realm of possibilities. So we want people to really remain vigilant and stay prepared, at least for tonight," Eric Lau, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Honolulu said Sunday.

Late Sunday, Douglas was 65 miles (105 kilometers) northeast of Honolulu. It had maximum sustained winds of 85 mph (140 kph), making it a Category 1 hurricane.

Heavy rain and [wind gusts](#) battered Maui during the morning, downing a [small tree](#) on the Hana Highway.

Gentle rain fell and blustery winds swayed trees on Oahu, home to the state's biggest city, Honolulu. Sand and debris washed ashore on a two-lane coastal road.

Despite the dangers, surfers rode waves and residents took selfies at a lookout point next to the ocean.

Lau said Douglas would have been a lot worse had its track been 20 or 30 miles (32 to 48 kilometers) to the south.

One reason is that this path put Douglas to the north of the state and not directly over the islands. Another is that this path mostly put the island chain near the southwest quadrant of the storm, which is often less destructive than the northeast and the right side of a hurricane's eye, Lau said.



An Oahu resident packing his surfboard on his bike rides through a deserted Waikiki on Kalakaua Ave., Sunday, July 26, 2020, in Honolulu. Most of Oahu residents are taking shelter preparing for the arrival of Hurricane Douglas. (AP Photo/Eugene Tanner)

"We were really playing with a really fine line, a razor thin line between what we've experienced today compared to what we could have experienced," he said.

Honolulu Mayor Kirk Caldwell warned Oahu wasn't "out of the woods yet" and [strong winds](#), heavy rains and flooding could still hit.

"We're cautiously optimistic that we'll be able to issue an all clear early tomorrow morning, but our city staff is continuing to monitor any effects this storm may have overnight," he said in a statement.

Duke Stevens, who lives in Hana on Maui's eastern tip, said by early afternoon there was no longer any wind and the light rain that fell persistently through the night had subsided.

"I've seen a lot worse," said Stevens, who has lived on Maui since 1987.

Antonia Hall of Kihei in west Maui said the storm avoided her area, although she and others were prepared for the worst.



A police officer with the Honolulu Police Department inspects the sand and debris washed onto a closed portion of Kamehameha Highway, Sunday, July 26, 2020, in Kaaawa, Hawaii. High surf caused by Hurricane Douglas washed the debris onto the highway. (AP Photo/Eugene Tanner)

"Maui has skirted so many hurricanes," she said. "This is just kind of something we go through here."

She brought her porch furniture inside, bought nonperishable food and filled her bathtub for an emergency water supply. Hall also made an early recording of her weekly podcast and gave it to a friend in case she was unable to broadcast from home.

About 300 people evacuated to the Hawaii Convention Center on the edge of Waikiki. On Maui, 22 people were at five shelters around the island.

Evacuees were told to bring masks and hand sanitizer along with the usual emergency supplies of food and water. People will have to wear face coverings to be admitted, and will have to wear them unless they are eating, drinking or sleeping.

State health department officials contacted each of the 625 people who were currently in isolation or quarantine as of Friday because they are either COVID-19 positive or have been in contact with someone who is. Every one of those indicated they would shelter-in-place and not seek refuge at a hurricane shelter.



The Keo family assisted the Aubrey family with sandbagging for the preparation of Hurricane Douglas in Hauula, Hawaii, on Sunday, July 26, 2020. Pictured from left-right are, is Keonaona Keo, 17, Aaron Keo, Malu Keo, Amy Aubrey, and Hiwa Keo, 12. (Cindy Ellen Russell/Honolulu Star-Advertiser via AP)



An Oahu resident purchases plywood at the local City Mill hardware store to cover up the windows of his home, Sunday, July 26, 2020, in Honolulu. Oahu residents are preparing for the arrival of Hurricane Douglas. (AP Photo/Eugene Tanner)



Evacuees wait to be screened prior to entry into the Hawai'i Convention Center—an American Red Cross shelter set up in advance of Hurricane Douglas, Sunday, July 26, 2020, in Honolulu. (Jamm Aquino/Honolulu Star-Advertiser via AP)





The local City Mill hardware store still has propane gas in stock, Sunday, July 26, 2020, in Honolulu. Oahu residents are preparing for the arrival of Hurricane Douglas. (AP Photo/Eugene Tanner)



Chris Gomes, left, and John Gomes, right, fill sand bags in preparation of the arrival of Hurricane Douglas in the town of Kailua, Sunday, July 26, 2020, in Honolulu. Residents on Oahu are getting ready for the arrival and hunkering down as the storm approaches the island. (AP Photo/Eugene Tanner)



An Oahu resident waits to cross Kalakaua Ave. in a deserted Waikiki, Sunday, July 26, 2020, in Honolulu. Most of Oahu residents are taking shelter and preparing for the arrival of Hurricane Douglas. (AP Photo/Eugene Tanner)



High surf breaks on Oahu's Windward coast as seen from the Makapuu Lookout, Sunday, July 26, 2020, in Honolulu. The high winds and big surf are being generated by Hurricane Douglas. (AP Photo/Eugene Tanner)



Businesses in the Oahu north shore area of Haleiwa, Hawaii, are boarded up and closed Sunday, July 26, 2020, Heavy rain and wind gusts battered Maui on Sunday as Hurricane Douglas swirled off the coast of Hawaii and officials urged residents to take shelter. Forecasters said the Category 1 hurricane would pass close to Oahu and potentially even make a direct hit on the island, which is home to state's biggest city of Honolulu. (AP Photo/Eugene Tanner)



An Oahu resident carries home his shopping bags in the Kakaako District, Sunday, July 26, 2020, in Honolulu. Oahu residents are preparing for the arrival of Hurricane Douglas. (AP Photo/Eugene Tanner)



Waikiki Beach fronting the Hilton Hawaiian Village is deserted as Oahu residents take shelter before the arrival of Hurricane Douglas, Sunday, July 26, 2020, in Honolulu.



A body surfer prepares to dive under a large wave generated by Hurricane Douglas, at Laie Beach Park, Sunday, July 26, 2020, in Laie, Hawaii. (AP Photo/Eugene Tanner)





A morning view of the city of Honolulu on the island of Oahu, is seen Sunday, July 26, 2020. The islands of Kauai, Oahu and all of Maui County are under a hurricane warning as Hurricane Douglas is just hours away from the state of Hawaii. (AP Photo/Eugene Tanner)



Some businesses in the North Shore Marketplace in Haleiwa, Hawaii, are boarded up and closed in anticipation of Hurricane Douglas, Sunday, July 26, 2020, on the island of Oahu. Heavy rain and wind gusts battered Maui on Sunday as Hurricane Douglas swirled off the coast of Hawaii and officials urged residents to take shelter. Forecasters said the Category 1 hurricane would pass close to Oahu and potentially even make a direct hit on the island, which is home to state's biggest city of Honolulu. (AP Photo/Eugene Tanner)



A surfer takes on a wave generated by Hurricane Douglas at Laie Beach Park, Sunday, July 26, 2020, in Laie, Hawaii. (AP Photo/Eugene Tanner)



Sand and debris is left on Kamehameha Highway from high surf generated by Hurricane Douglas, Sunday, July 26, 2020, in Hauula, Hawaii. Hurricane Douglas came within "razor thin" distance of the Hawaiian Islands but spared the state the worst of the strong winds, storm surge and flooding officials had warned about. (AP Photo/Eugene Tanner)

Hawaii has some of the lowest coronavirus infection rates in the nation, but COVID-19 numbers have been rising in recent weeks. For three consecutive days through Saturday, Hawaii reported record highs of newly confirmed cases.

President Donald Trump issued an emergency declaration for Hawaii because of the hurricane, directing federal assistance to supplement state and local response efforts.

Hawaiian Airlines canceled all Sunday flights between Hawaii and the U.S. mainland and also between the islands.

Rainfall was expected to be between 5 to 15 inches (13 to 38 centimeters).

Oahu and Kauai were all under a hurricane warning. A warning for Maui and a hurricane watch for the Big Island were canceled.

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