

# Hurricane Ernesto downgraded to tropical storm as it exits Bermuda

August 18 2024

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Hurricane Ernesto made landfall in Bermuda with maximum sustained winds of 85 miles (137 kilometers) per hour.

Hurricane Ernesto was downgraded to a tropical storm Saturday after it lashed Bermuda with heavy rains and strong winds, leaving much of the

British Atlantic Ocean territory without power before continuing on its path toward eastern Canada.

The hurricane, which hit Puerto Rico earlier this week, "will move away from Bermuda" Saturday night but would still create tropical storm conditions, according to the US-based National Hurricane Center.

It warned that it was possible for the storm to intensify on Sunday "and Ernesto could regain hurricane status."

It made landfall in Bermuda at 5:30 am local time (0830 GMT) packing maximum sustained winds of 85 miles (137 kilometers) per hour, the NHC said.

"As Ernesto moves further away to the northeast, occasional squally showers from the west will continue to wet the Island," the Bermuda Weather Service said Saturday night, warning that seas would remain hazardous through the night.

The island was expected to see "drier and brighter weather" on Sunday as Ernesto moved northeast and passed near southeastern Newfoundland late Monday.

Ernesto was located some 100 miles northeast of the island around midnight local time and was expected to dump seven to nine inches (175 to 225 millimeters) of rain on Bermuda overall.

"This rainfall will likely result in considerable life-threatening flash flooding to the island, especially in low-lying areas," the NHC said.

The storm had left some 18,300 customers without electricity, Bermuda's power firm Belco reported, or more than 50 percent of its customers on the island with a population of 64,000.

Images on social media showed downed trees blocking roads, [power lines](#) damaged by the storm's high winds and flooded roads.

Ahead of the storm's arrival, Bermudians prepared Friday by hauling boats out of the ocean, boarding up windows, filling bathtubs with water, and stocking up on batteries and food supplies.

"Even though we have been downgraded from [hurricane](#) to [tropical storm](#), we must remember that some gusts will be intense," Minister of National Security Michael Weeks said Saturday, according to The Royal Gazette newspaper.

"There are a lot of downed wires and foliage, so the situation can be dangerous," he added.

Some key roads were closed and bus and ferry services were suspended, the paper said.

Bermuda's L.F. Wade International Airport said it would remain shut until Sunday after the storm had passed.

Ernesto was moving northeast and expected to slowly depart Bermuda Saturday and move near or east of Newfoundland in eastern Canada on Monday night, the NHC said.

It warned that dangerous beach conditions are expected along the US East Coast through next week.

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