

# Five dead as Storm Debby moves through US southeast

August 6 2024, by Nicholas ROLL

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Surge from storm Debby inundates a neighborhood in Cedar Key, Florida.

Coastal South Carolina and Georgia were under flash flood warnings Tuesday, as Tropical Storm Debby swamped the southeastern United States, leaving at least five dead.

A 13-year-old boy died when a tree was blown onto a mobile home in Levy County, the sheriff's office there said, after Debby made landfall on Florida's Gulf Coast earlier Monday as a Category One hurricane.

Authorities said a truck driver was killed after his 18-wheeler plunged into a canal in Hillsborough County, while a 38-year-old woman and 12-year-old boy died in a car crash in Dixie County.

As the storm moved northward into Georgia, a 19-year-old was killed when a tree fell into the side of a house, according to the Colquitt County coroner's office.

Early Tuesday morning, the National Hurricane Center (NHC) was warning of "potentially historic heavy rainfall" and "catastrophic flooding" in parts of southeast Georgia and eastern South Carolina.

The Weather Channel reported tornadoes in South Carolina overnight.

President Joe Biden has approved emergency declarations for Florida, Georgia and South Carolina, allowing for federal assistance in coordinating disaster relief efforts.

Florida Governor Ron DeSantis also activated his state's National Guard, with more than 3,000 service members mobilized to help with storm response.

The governors of Georgia and South Carolina declared a state of emergency ahead of Debby's arrival.

By Tuesday morning, the NHC said the storm was registering maximum sustained winds of 45 mph (75 kph) as it swept through Georgia, expected to later move offshore.

The storm is set to move along the East Coast, but has already weakened after making initial landfall with sustained speeds of 80 mph (130 kph) as a Category One hurricane—the lowest on a scale of five.

Vice President Kamala Harris—the Democratic candidate in the US presidential election—postponed events in North Carolina and Georgia this week due to the storm, according to local media reports and her campaign team.

Meanwhile, the US Border Patrol announced that Debby had washed up 25 packages of cocaine worth around \$1 million to the coast of the Florida Keys, where they were seized.

In July, at least 18 people were killed when the powerful Hurricane Beryl tore through the Caribbean before hitting the southern US states of Texas and Louisiana.

Scientists say climate change likely plays a role in the rapid intensification of storms such as Beryl because there is more energy in a warmer ocean for them to feed on.

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Citation: Five dead as Storm Debby moves through US southeast (2024, August 6) retrieved 6 August 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2024-08-storm-debby-florida-coast.html>

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