

Hurricanes Irma and Jose: What we know

11 September 2017



A fallen tree crashes atop a row of cars on September 10 in Miami, Florida in the wake of Hurricane Irma

Hurricane Irma pummelled Florida on Sunday, killing three people after causing at least 27 deaths in a multi-billion-dollar rampage through the Caribbean.

Irma churned over the lower Florida Keys islands as a Category Four hurricane before making a second landfall on the peninsula's southwestern coast.

Although Irma was downgraded to a Category Two storm, it was still packing dangerous winds of up to 105 miles (169 kilometers) per hour as it neared Fort Myers, a major tourist destination in southwestern Florida.

It was expected to remain a hurricane through at least Monday with a turn to the north-northwest overnight, according to the National Hurricane Center.

A second Category Four hurricane, Jose, followed part of Irma's track, but spared the storm-hit Caribbean islands of St Martin and St Barts, which had already suffered catastrophic damage from Irma.

Jose, veering north towards the mid-Atlantic, is expected to pose no threat to the United States.

Toll from Irma

The death toll is at least 30: 14 in the French island of St Barts and the Dutch-French territory of St Martin; six in the British Caribbean islands; at least four in the US Virgin Islands; at least two in Puerto Rico; and one in Barbuda. Three other deaths occurred in Florida due to car accidents sparked by strong winds and torrential rain.

The International Red Cross says 1.2 million people have already been affected by Irma—a number that could rise to 26 million.

The combined economic cost of Hurricanes Harvey and Irma could reach \$290 billion, equivalent to 1.5 percent of the US gross domestic product, US forecaster AccuWeather said in a report.

Barbuda

Irma hit the tiny Caribbean island of Barbuda on Wednesday as a Category Five hurricane, with winds of up to 295 kph. The island suffered "absolute devastation," with up to 30 percent of properties demolished, Prime Minister Gaston Browne said.



treatment plants will be knocked out for months.

French President Emmanuel Macron will arrive in St Martin Tuesday.

In the British archipelago of Anguilla, one man was crushed to death in a house collapse.

British Virgin Islands

Five people were killed in the British Virgin Islands, according to the local government.

Just east of Puerto Rico, it is home to roughly 28,000 people and includes British billionaire Richard Branson's Necker Island.

Updated forecast track of Hurricane Irma, as of 0000 GMT Monday.

One person is known to have died on the island of 1,600 residents, apparently a child whose family was trying to get to safer ground.

St Martin, St Barts and Anguilla

The holiday islands of St Martin and St Barts, also hit on Wednesday, suffered the highest toll among Caribbean victims of Irma.

St Martin is divided between France and the Netherlands. France said 10 people had died on its side of the island, while the Netherlands said the storm killed four on the Dutch side, called Sint Maarten. On the Dutch side, 70 percent of the infrastructure has been destroyed.

France's state-owned reinsurer CCR estimates damage on the two [islands](#) at 1.2 billion euros (\$1.4 billion).

France and the Netherlands are rushing in logistical support, as well as hundreds of extra police to clamp down on looting.

French aid includes helicopters, engineering equipment, medical supplies and a million litres (265,000 gallons) of water, as the three water-



A mother comforts her child as they wait in front of Grand-Case Esperance airport entrance to leave Saint-Martin, on September 10, 2017 on the French Caribbean island of Saint-Martin after it was devastated by Irma hurricane

US Virgin Islands

At least four people were killed in the US Virgin Islands, officials told AFP.

Puerto Rico

At least two people were killed in the US territory of Puerto Rico, and more than half of its three million residents were without power after rivers broke their banks in the centre and north of the island.

Dominican Republic

Some 20,000 people were evacuated and more than 2,000 homes affected by floods in the Dominican Republic, the eastern part of the island of Hispaniola, which is also shared with Haiti.

Haiti

Irma brought flooding and caused injuries in Haiti, but passed further north than had been forecast, sparing the impoverished island the worst. A number of roads were washed out.

Cuba

Irma made landfall on the island's Camaguey Archipelago late Friday, knocking down power lines, uprooting trees and ripping the roofs off homes.

Authorities said they had evacuated more than a million people as a precaution, including about 4,000 in the capital.

Ambulances and firefighters patrolled streets littered with hunks of roofs, power lines and tree branches brought down by strong winds that blasted over Cuba on Saturday.



In a video grab from a cell phone, a flooded street is seen as hurricane Irma moves through Miami, Florida on September 10, 2017

Irma: Where next?

Irma toppled cranes, swallowed streets and left millions without power as it unleashed its terrifying fury on the US state of Florida, threatening the coastal cities of Naples and Fort Myers and Tampa Bay with storm surges of up to 15 feet (4.5 meters), according to the National Hurricane Center.

A total of 6.3 million people have been asked to leave their homes in Florida.

A state of emergency has been declared in Georgia, South Carolina and Virginia, as well as in Florida. Georgia ordered the evacuation of the city of Savannah and other coastal areas.

President Donald Trump said on Sunday he would go to Florida "very soon" to assess relief efforts.

Hurricanes Jose and Katia

Hurricane Jose, after strengthening to Category Four status, passed 135 km (83 miles) north of St Barts and 125 km from Saint Martin.

France's meteorological agency issued its highest warning, saying Jose could become a "dangerous event of exceptional intensity."

But "thanks to a passage which was further away than anticipated, the effects on the territory were markedly less," the meteorological agency said.

Another [hurricane](#), Katia, made landfall in eastern Mexico late Friday killing two [people](#), just as the country grappled with the deaths and damage inflicted by its worst earthquake in a century.

© 2017 AFP

APA citation: Hurricanes Irma and Jose: What we know (2017, September 11) retrieved 24 September 2020 from <https://phys.org/news/2017-09-hurricanes-irma-jose.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.