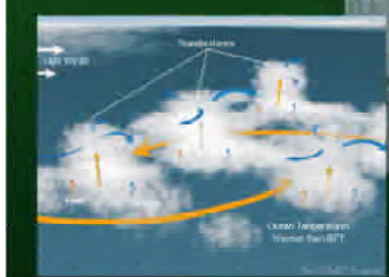
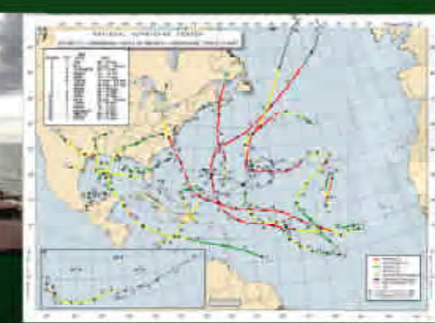
HURRICANES

A hurricane is a type of tropical cyclone, the generic term for a low pressure system that generally forms in the tropics. A typical cyclone is accompanied by thunderstorms, and in the Northern Hemisphere, a counterclockwise circulation of winds near the earth's surface.

Hurricanes can cause catastrophic damage to coastlines and several hundred miles inland. Winds can exceed 155 miles per hour. Hurricanes and tropical storms can also spawn tornadoes and create storm surges along the coast, and cause extensive damage from heavy rainfall.

Hurricanes are classified into five categories, based on wind speed, central pressure, and damage potential. Category Three and higher hurricanes are considered major hurricanes, though Categories One and Two are still extremely dangerous and warrant full attention.





Saffir/Simpson Scale

Scale Number (Category)	Sustained Winds (MPH)	Damage	Storm Surge
1	74 - 95	Minimal: Unanchored mobile homes, vegetation and signs at risk.	4 - 5 feet
2	95 - 110	Moderate: All mobile homes, roofs, small crafts at risk, flooding.	6 - 8 feet
3	111 - 130	Extensive: Small buildings at risk, low-lying roads cut off.	9 - 12 feet
4	131 - 155	Extreme: Roofs destroyed, trees down, roads cut off, mobile homes destroyed. Beach homes flooded.	13 - 18 feet
5	More than 155	Catastrophic: Most buildings destroyed. Vegetation destroyed. Major roads cut off. Homes flooded.	Greater than 18 feet

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