

Teacher's Guide August

Coastal Storms and Hurricanes



Hurricane Season Is Here!

When it comes to hurricanes, New York is one of the country's most susceptible cities. Each of the five boroughs touches the coastline, making its population vulnerable to wind and flooding. The city's geography is a factor too. The New York and New Jersey coastlines meet at a right angle; this angle basically guides a storm surge directly into New York City. With sustained winds of 74 mph or greater, hurricanes can cause major damage.

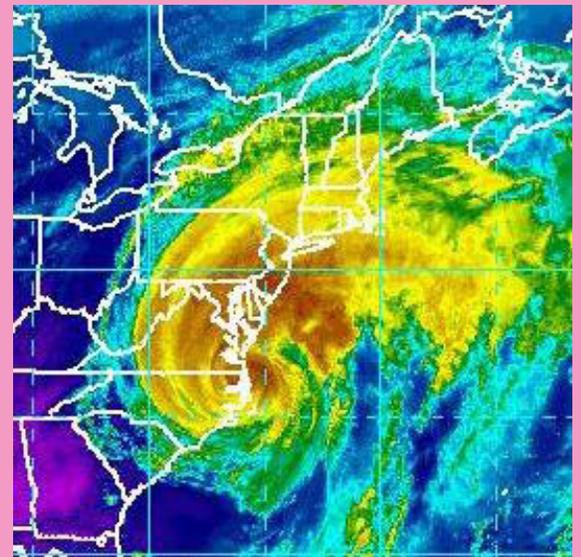
Hurricane Words to Know

- **Hurricane:** A tropical cyclone with sustained winds of 74 mph or greater.
- **Hurricane Watch:** An announcement that hurricane conditions are possible within a specified area. Watches are issued 48 hours before tropical storm force winds are predicted, allowing time to take precautions or evacuate.
- **Hurricane Warning:** An announcement that hurricane conditions are expected within a specified area. The warning is issued 36 hours before tropical storm force winds are predicted.
- **Tropical Storm:** A tropical cyclone with sustained winds of 39–73 mph.
- **Tropical Cyclone:** An organized, rotating, low pressure weather system of clouds and thunderstorms that develops in the tropics.

Let's get ready and stay safe if a hurricane heads our way!

Does a hurricane always mean evacuation?

No. But just because your zone isn't evacuating doesn't mean you don't need to take precautions. If a hurricane hits, your area may still lose power. So it's critical for students and their families to have emergency supply kits in case they have to shelter in place.



How are hurricanes named?

A tropical storm is assigned a name when it reaches a sustained wind speed of 39 mph. If the storm becomes a hurricane, it keeps that same name.

Hurricanes are named in alphabetical order, alternating between male and female names. The World Meteorological Organization develops a list of names each year. Names can be repeated after six years; however, names of particularly strong storms are not used again. Retired hurricane names include Sandy, Irene, Igor, Tomas, Gustav, Ike, Paloma, Dennis, Katrina, Rita, Stan, and Wilma.



Department of Education
Office of Emergency Management

Reinforce the message of preparedness and safety when hurricanes and coastal storms strike and build skills across the curriculum with these simple activities:



Language Arts

Under New York State law, the mayor has the power to declare a local state of emergency. This might include issuing evacuation instructions for hurricane evacuation zones. Challenge students to write a short speech for the mayor explaining the importance of following evacuation orders.



Social Studies

New York City has six hurricane zones. Visit www.NYC.gov/hurricanezones to find out what zone your school is in. Then allow students to check their home addresses and the addresses of family members and friends. As homework, have students work with their families to plan where they would go if an evacuation order was issued for their zone.



Math

Hurricanes are measured according to the Saffir Simpson Hurricane Scale. Challenge students to investigate the scale and then graph hurricanes at different strengths. Give extra points for students who include hurricanes that have hit New York City on their graphs!



Science

Students who live in high-rise buildings or basement apartments may need to take extra precautions during hurricanes, even if they don't live in an evacuation zone. Have students brainstorm a list of what these precautions may be and then research them to see if they were correct. Encourage students to share the science behind each precaution.

To Learn More:

“Ready New York Hurricanes and New York City” brochure,
http://www.nyc.gov/html/oem/downloads/pdf/hurricane_brochure_english.pdf

NYC Office of Emergency Management, www.NYC.gov/oem

OEM on Facebook, www.facebook.com/NYCEmergencymanagement

OEM on Twitter, [@nycoem](https://twitter.com/nycoem)

Notify NYC, Register for emergency notifications by visiting NYC.gov/notifynyc,
calling 311, or following [@NotifyNYC](https://twitter.com/NotifyNYC) on Twitter

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/oem/html/news/videos.shtml>

<http://www.cdc.gov/phpr/readywrigley/>