

Hurricane Season Begins June 1

Today, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) issued the 2009 Atlantic Hurricane Season Outlook. National Weather Service forecasters expect a "near-normal" hurricane season this year, with a 70 percent chance of nine to 14 named storms:

So don't let your guard down, Commerce Secretary Gary Locke said.

"Today, more than 35 million Americans live in regions most threatened by Atlantic hurricanes," Locke said. "Timely and accurate warnings of severe weather help save lives and property. Public awareness and public preparedness are the best defenses against a hurricane."

The Climate Prediction Center released its forecast today. It calls for a 50 percent probability of a near-normal season, a 25 percent probability of an above-normal season and a 25 percent probability of a below-normal season.

Competing climate factors worldwide makes this year's forecast more uncertain than usual, forecasters said.

They include enhanced rainfall over West Africa, warmer Atlantic waters and reduced wind shear. But if an El Niño develops in the Eastern Pacific this summer or if ocean temperatures in the eastern tropical Atlantic remain cooler than normal, things could change, the season could become less active. On Saturday May 30, Tampa Fire Rescue along with Hillsborough County Emergency Management will host the Tampa Bay Hurricane Expo at MOSI...

This Hurricane Expo will focus on the importance of knowing what evacuation zone you live in, the threats you and your community may face this storm season by living in an evacuation zone, what plans you and your family should have in case you are asked to evacuate, and where are the best places to evacuate to. Keep in mind that not everyone lives in an evacuation zone and it is not necessary to travel hundreds of miles to be safe. This was evident in 2004 as Hurricane Charlie's path took it over Orlando where many Hillsborough County residents evacuated.

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The Expo will be a family-friendly event featuring vendors, educational seminars and giveaways. The inaugural 2008 Tampa Bay Hurricane Expo attracted more than 3,000 visitors, 50 vendors, and prominent speakers such as Bill Proenza, former director of the National Hurricane Center and Dan Noah, National Weather Service. It is our goal to expand on that success with this year's Expo. Please visit Gus' Hurricane Preparedness page and specifically review the Hurricane Preparedness Checklist (PDF).

You can also find links to both Federal and local websites that provide useful information to help protect your home, family and pets before, during, and after a storm.

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url(http://b.static.ak.fbcdn.net/images/share/facebook_share_icon.gif?8:26981) no-repeat top right; text-decoration:none;
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