

Natural Disasters - Typhoons

Personnel that reside in South Korea should be aware that typhoon season normally runs from June to November. Everyone should pay particular attention to local weather and travel information and consult the [Korean Meteorological Administration](#) website, which has information in English.

When and where do tropical cyclones occur?

Tropical cyclones, also called typhoons and hurricanes, usually occur at predictable times of year in distinct parts of the world. They feed on heat that is released when moist air rises. So 'hurricane season' coincides with the months in which an area of sea is at its warmest:

June – November in the Northern Hemisphere Tropics (Caribbean, Atlantic, South East Asia, Pacific, Far East)

Tropical storms lose their strength as they move over land. The range of error in the forecast of the path of a tropical storm can be significant. Even just a day before the storm arrives the forecast can have a margin of error of 50 miles. Tropical cyclones can change directions in unpredictable ways.

What to do if a tropical cyclone is coming?

It's difficult to accurately predict where, when and at what strength a tropical cyclone will strike, as they often veer off-course, change their tracking speed and intensify or weaken quite suddenly. It is advisable to follow local advice, which in some cases may be to leave the immediate area if a storm is heading your way.

If you are in a cyclone region during the tropical cyclone season:

- Monitor AFN TV and Radio
- Monitor the Garrison Webpage
- Follow updates through Facebook

Tropical cyclones can seriously damage and disrupt an installation's infrastructure. It may limit or delay public transportation, reduce facility operating hours, and cause for work delays.

What's the difference between a hurricane, typhoon, or tropical cyclone?

There is no difference. Hurricanes and typhoons are regionally specific names for a severe tropical cyclone.

Wind speed is used to categorise a tropical cyclone:

- less than 34 knots (39mph) - tropical depression
- more than 34 knots - tropical storm and given a name (Tropical Storm Guchol)

- more than 64 knots (74mph) - designated either a hurricane, typhoon, severe tropical cyclone, severe cyclonic storm or tropical cyclone depending where it is in the world
- the strength of hurricanes is categorized on a scale of 1 to 5 with category 1 being over 64 knots.

The effects of a Tropical Cyclone

Tropical cyclones can cause damage in a number of ways:

- **High winds:** buildings can be damaged or destroyed; trees, power and telephone lines toppled; debris turns into projectiles
- **Storm surge:** a hurricane can provoke a temporary rise in sea level of several meters which can flood coastal areas and damage buildings on the shoreline
- **Very heavy rainfall:** this can cause localized or widespread flooding and mudslides.

What can I do to prepare?