

PUBLIC INFORMATION STATEMENT
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE RALEIGH NC
800 AM EDT MON MAY 25 2009

...NORTH CAROLINA HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS WEEK...

This week has been declared North Carolina's Hurricane Preparedness Week for 2009. All week long the National Weather Service will be issuing informative messages to help you prepare for hurricane season.

Each day we will cover a different topic. Today we will talk about tornadoes in tropical systems.

Nearly all tropical storms and hurricanes produce tornadoes which add to the storms destruction. Seventeen percent of all tornadoes in Central North Carolina have been associated with tropical systems. In 2004, a record year for tornadoes in North Carolina, around 45 tornadoes touched down in North Carolina from the coast to the mountains spawned by the remnants of Bonnie...Charley...Gaston...Frances and Ivan. No region of the state has avoided tropical tornadoes. Three people died during the 2004 tropical season as a tornado ripped apart their mobile home in Pender County during tropical storm Bonnie. Both hurricanes Floyd and Fran also produced numerous tornadoes destroying homes in central and eastern North Carolina.

Tornadoes are typically the first threat North Carolina faces from hurricanes as the outer rain bands push inland nearly a hundred of miles ahead of the hurricane eye. The tornado threat precedes the hurricane landfall by many hours. As the first outer rain bands from the system move inland well away from the center of circulation...tornadoes usually occur.

Most tornadoes in tropical systems occur north and east of the primary circulation or eye. This region of the storm has the most shear and favorable wind profiles necessary for tornado development. Since tropical squalls typically move at 40 to 60 mph...tornadoes embedded in these bands strike quickly with little warning. Tropical tornadoes develop in a matter of minutes and forecasters work diligently providing warnings for those circulations will become tornadic.

Most tornadoes associated with the outer bands of a tropical system are relatively weak...however these weak tornadoes still pack winds of 100 to 130 mph. This is enough to demolish mobile homes...severely damage well built houses and in some cases flip cars.

No mobile home or manufactured home is safe in hurricane force or tornadic winds. Residents in mobile homes should always evacuate to a safer structure which may include the home of another family member or friend nearby. When sheltering in a sturdy building...you want to take shelter on the lowest floor in a bathroom or closet when high winds threaten.

When a tropical system is forecast to move into the area you can expect tornadoes. Realize the tropical systems can make landfall in another state other than North Carolina and still pose a serious tornado threat to your home and family. You should always monitor local forecasts paying attention to tornado outlooks...watches and warnings issued well in advance of the tropical system.