



A Hurricane Can Vary Its Path Sharply In A Short Time

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DENTON, Texas -- Hurricanes are extremely dangerous and unpredictable. They can strengthen tremendously in a matter of hours, taking coastal residents and experts by surprise. There is no guarantee they will follow the path predicted by computer models according to state and federal emergency management officials.

"The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is not a first responder, but rather is there to support state, local and tribal officials" said Gary Jones, FEMA's acting administrator for Region 6. "Our key message is simple: emergency management begins with you, the individual. It involves all levels of the hurricane response team including our other federal partners, state and local governments and officials. Each and every one of us has a stake in emergency preparedness. How we, as a nation, survive the next disaster will be defined by this preparedness."

Monitor broadcast media and listen to instructions from local officials. If you live in an evacuation zone, leave when local officials tell you to do so.

Projections for the path of a storm are made with a "cone of error" – shaped like an ice cream cone with a black line through the center. The further out in time, the less accurate the predicted direction can be.

24-hour predictions: The center of the storm can swing 100 miles to the left or right of the projected track over the next 24-hour period.

48-hour predictions: The center of the storm can swing 160 miles to the left or right of the projected track over the next two days.

72-hour predictions: The center of the storm can swing 230 miles to the left or right of the projected track over the next three days.

Four-day predictions: The center of the storm can swing 290 miles to the left or right of the projected track over the next four days.

Five-day predictions: The center of the storm can swing 350 miles to the left or right of the projected track over the next five days.

For more information, go to:

Get A Game Plan Web page: www.GetAGamePlan.org

FEMA Hurricane Preparedness Web page: www.fema.gov/hazard/hurricane/hu_season09.shtm

FEMA leads and supports the nation in a risk-based, comprehensive emergency management system of preparedness, protection, response, recovery, and mitigation, to reduce the loss of life and property and protect the nation from all hazards including natural disasters, acts of terrorism and man-made disasters.