

## RECENT EVENTS

# Reflecting on 2017 storms

To this date, the deadliest natural disaster in United States history occurred in 1900 when a hurricane ripped through an unprepared Galveston, Texas.

According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association, an estimated 6,000 to 12,000 people lost their lives.

Last year showcased some of the fiercest and most destructive storms in our nation's history. In fact, the National Hurricane Center says last season entered the list as the 17th deadliest hurricane season since the nation began keeping track of statistics. In addition to claiming hundreds of lives, these storms caused damage in the excess of \$200 billion. These numbers are expected to rise as recovery efforts are still underway in places like Puerto Rico.

The sheer destruction of this epic hurricane season should encourage you to take preparedness seriously. Here are the largest storms from 2017:

## Hurricane Harvey

This Category 4 storm crashed into the United States with sustained winds estimated at 132 miles per hour. Harvey stalled with its eye over or near the Texas coast, leaving behind the historic amount of over 60 inches or rain of the southwestern portion of the state. The torrential downpour caused disastrous flooding to both residential and commercial properties. Harvey was directly responsible for claiming the lives of at least 68 people.

## Hurricane Irma

This disastrous storm developed from a tropical wave off the west coast of Africa on Aug. 27. On Sept.



High and fast water rose in Bayou River in Houston after heavy rains from Harvey caused major flooding.

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9, it struck Cuba as a Category 5 hurricane, the first of this size to hit the country since 1932. It was the next day when it crossed into Marco Island, Florida, with estimated wind speeds of around 141 miles per hour. Seven deaths were directly caused by the exceptionally high winds, excessive rainfall and high surf that Irma brought to

the United States. The storm was indirectly responsible for 85 deaths in the country, 80 of those being in Florida.

## Hurricane Maria

Citizens of Puerto Rico are still reeling from the effects of this powerful hurricane, which was a Category 5 storm when it hit Dominica and a Category 4 as it barreled

into Puerto Rico. Bringing winds nearing 155 miles per hour, the island is still suffering from massive power outages as it rebuilds. As of April 2018, the official death count in PR is at 65. Unfortunately, this number is expected to rise. The United States mainland was spared as Irma changed paths before her expected arrival in North Carolina.