

*Ida

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Office said on Facebook. The person, who was not identified, was pronounced dead. Prairieville is a suburb of Baton Rouge, Louisiana’s capital city.

The power outage in New Orleans heightened the city’s vulnerability to flooding and left hundreds of thousands of people without air conditioning and refrigeration in sweltering summer heat.

Ida — a Category 4 storm — hit on the same date Hurricane Katrina ravaged Louisiana and Mississippi 16 years earlier, coming ashore about 45 miles (72 kilometers) west of where Category 3 Katrina first struck land. Ida’s 150-mph (230 kph) winds tied it for the fifth-strongest hurricane to ever hit the mainland U.S. It dropped hours later to a Category 1 storm with maximum winds of 95 mph (155 kph) as it crawled inland, its eye about 45 miles (70 kilometers) northwest of New Orleans.

Significant flooding was reported late Sunday night in LaPlace, a community adjacent to Lake Pontchartrain, meteorologists in New Orleans said. Many people took to social media, pleading for boat rescues as the water rose.

The rising ocean swamped the barrier island of Grand Isle as landfall came just to the west at Port Fourchon. Ida made a second landfall about two hours later near Galliano. The hurricane was churning through the far southern Louisiana wetlands, with the more than 2 million people living in and around New Orleans and Baton Rouge under threat.

“This is going to be much stronger than we usually see and, quite frankly, if you had to draw up the worst possible path for a hurricane in Loui-

siana, it would be something very, very close to what we’re seeing,” Gov. John Bel Edwards told The Associated Press.

People in Louisiana woke up to a monster storm after Ida’s top winds grew by 45 mph (72 kph) in five hours as the hurricane moved through some of the warmest ocean water in the world in the northern Gulf of Mexico.

The entire city of New Orleans late Sunday was without power, according to city officials. The city’s power supplier — Entergy — confirmed that the only power in the city was coming from generators, the city’s Office of Homeland Security & Emergency Preparedness said on Twitter. The message included a screen shot that cited “catastrophic transmission damage” for the power failure.

The city relies on Entergy for backup power for the pumps that remove storm water from city streets. Rain from Ida is expected to test that pump system.

More than 1 million customers were without power in Louisiana, and over 40,000 were in the dark in Mississippi, according to PowerOutage.US, which tracks outages nationwide.

In New Orleans, wind tore at awnings and caused buildings to sway and water to spill out of Lake Ponchartrain. The Coast Guard office in New Orleans received more than a dozen reports of breakaway barges, said Petty Officer Gabriel Wisdom. In Lafitte about 35 miles (55 km) south of New Orleans, a loose barge struck a bridge, according to Jefferson Parish officials.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers spokesman Ricky Boyette said engineers detected a “negative flow” on the Mississippi River as a result of storm surge. And Edwards said he watched a live

video feed from around Port Fourchon as Ida came ashore that showed that roofs had been blown off buildings in “many places.”

“The storm surge is just tremendous,” Edwards told the AP.

Officials said Ida’s swift intensification from a few thunderstorms to a massive hurricane in just three days left no time to organize a mandatory evacuation of New Orleans’ 390,000 residents. Mayor LaToya Cantrell urged residents remaining in the city on Sunday to “hunker down.”

Marco Apostolico said he felt confident riding out the storm at his home in New Orleans’ Lower 9th Ward, one of the city’s hardest-hit neighborhoods when levees failed and released a torrent of floodwater during Katrina.

His home was among those rebuilt with the help of actor Brad Pitt to withstand hurricane-force winds. But the memory of Katrina still hung over the latest storm.

“It’s obviously a lot of heavy feelings,” he said. “And yeah, potentially scary and dangerous.”

The region getting Ida’s worst includes petrochemical sites and major ports, which could sustain significant damage. It is also an area that is already reeling from a resurgence of COVID-19 infections due to low vaccination rates and the highly contagious delta variant.

New Orleans hospitals planned to ride out the storm with their beds nearly full, as similarly stressed hospitals elsewhere had little room for evacuated patients. And shelters for those fleeing their homes carried an added risk of becoming flashpoints for new infections.

Forecasters warned winds stronger than 115 mph (185 kph) threatened Houma, a city of 33,000 that supports

for fresh food disappeared almost overnight,” AFBF President Zippy Duvall said. “While previous CFAP funding addressed many losses, AFBF recognized that contract growers were left out and worked with lawmakers and the administration to ensure all farmers’ voices were being heard.”

As a co-chair of the Senate Chicken Caucus, Senator Roger Wicker played a monumental role in the development of this aid.

“We cannot thank Senator Wicker enough for his work on this issue,” McCormick said. “During his tenure in Congress, he has always been a friend to Farm Bureau and the Mississippi agriculture industry. I am proud to say a Mississippi senator had such a huge role in pushing this historic policy.”

“We thank Senator Roger Wicker and Senator Chris Coons, as co-chairs of the



An abandoned vehicle is half submerged in a ditch next to a near flooded highway as the outer bands of Hurricane Ida arrive Sunday, Aug. 29, 2021, in Bay Saint Louis, Miss. (AP Photo/Steve Helber)



A section of roof that was blown off of a building in the French Quarter by Hurricane Ida winds blocks an intersection, Sunday, Aug. 29, 2021, in New Orleans. (AP Photo/Eric Gay)

oil platforms in the Gulf.

The hurricane was also threatening neighboring Mississippi, where Katrina demolished oceanfront homes. With Ida approaching, Claudette Jones evacuated her home east of Gulfport, Mississippi, as waves started pounding the shore.

“I’m praying I can go back to a normal home like I left,” she said. “That’s what I’m praying for. But I’m not sure

Senate Chicken Caucus, as well as the Senate and House Agriculture committees for their work to address the shortcomings of CFAP assistance, and we appreciate the Biden administration and Secretary Vilsack for seeing this aid through,” Duvall said. “COVID relief will help farmers across the country recover from the damage caused by the pandemic and ensure they can continue putting food on the table for America’s families.”

USDA also announced it is amending the CFAP 2 payment calculation for several commodities by allowing farmers to substitute 2018 sales for 2019 sales.

New and modified CFAP 2 applications are due by Oct. 12, 2021. Interested farmers should contact their local Farm Service Agency (FSA) office. To find a local FSA office, visit farmers.gov/service-locator.

at this point.”

Comparisons to the Aug. 29, 2005, landfall of Katrina weighed heavily on residents bracing for Ida. Katrina was blamed for 1,800 deaths as it caused levee breaches and catastrophic flooding in New Orleans. Ida’s hurricane-force winds stretched 50 miles (80 kilometers) from the storm’s eye, or about half the size of Katrina, and a New Orleans’ infrastructure official emphasized that the city is in a “very different place than it was 16 years ago.”

The levee system has been massively overhauled since Katrina, Ramsey Green, deputy chief administrative officer for infrastructure, said before the worst of the storm hit. While water may not penetrate levees, Green said if forecasts of up to 20 inches (50 centimeters) of rain prove true, the city’s underfunded and neglected network of pumps, underground pipes and surface canals likely won’t be able to keep up.

The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality was in contact with more than 1,500 oil refineries, chemical plants and other sensitive facilities and will respond to any reported pollution leaks or petroleum spills, agency spokesman Greg Langley said. He said the agency would deploy

three mobile air-monitoring laboratories after the storm passes to sample, analyze and report any threats to public health.

Louisiana’s 17 oil refineries account for nearly one-fifth of the U.S. refining capacity and its two liquefied natural gas export terminals ship about 55% of the nation’s total exports, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration. Government statistics show that 95% of oil and gas production in the Gulf Coast region was shut down as Ida made landfall on Sunday, according to energy company S&P Global Platts.

Louisiana is also home to two nuclear power plants, one near New Orleans and another about 27 miles (about 43 kilometers) northwest of Baton Rouge.

President Joe Biden approved emergency declarations for Louisiana and Mississippi ahead of Ida’s arrival. He said Sunday the country was praying for the best for Louisiana and would put its “full might behind the rescue and recovery” effort once the storm passes.

Edwards warned his state to brace for potentially weeks of recovery.

“Many, many people are going to be tested in ways that we can only imagine today,” the governor told a news conference.

USDA Announces Contract Growers Aid Program

Up to \$1 billion available for producers who suffered losses during pandemic

Jackson, MS (August 24, 2021) – Farmers who were previously ineligible for the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program 2 (CFAP 2) can now apply for aid thanks to a collaboration between the Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF), American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF), United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), National Chicken Council and lawmakers. Up to \$1 billion will be made available through the Consolidated Appropriations Act to livestock and poultry producers who suffered financial losses from January 1, 2020, through December 27, 2020.

The Consolidated Appropriations Act expands as-

sistance coverage to include chickens, poultry eggs, turkeys, hogs and pigs, ducks, geese, pheasants and quail, including eligible breeding stock and eggs of all eligible poultry types produced under contract.

MFBF brought this issue to the attention of AFBF during a conference call among southeastern Farm Bureaus in April 2020 and has been engaged with it for more than a year.

“This is a historic day for contract producers,” MFBF President Mike McCormick said. “On behalf of all MFBF members, thank you to USDA for recognizing the astounding loss farmers experienced during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic,”

“When restaurants and schools closed, the demand