

NEWS BRIEF

Hurricane Helene Heading to Florida

As of Wednesday, Sept. 25, 2024, Hurricane Helene was on its way through the Gulf of Mexico toward Florida, necessitating vigilance and preparation for area residents.

Helene has developed quickly and is expected to strengthen to a Category 3 storm or greater by the time it reaches landfall, which is anticipated on Thursday.

As of Wednesday, the storm had sustained winds of 80 MPH.

What to Expect

Helene is likely to bring “life-threatening” conditions, according to the National Hurricane Center. This could include storm surges, flooding, high winds, power outages and heavy rain.

Florida is expected to bear the brunt of the hurricane, especially along the Florida Peninsula and Big Bend coast. Northern and eastern parts of the state are also at high risk of storm-related damage.

Approximately 32 million Florida residents were under flood watch as of Wednesday, according to NBC News. ABC News reported that 19 Florida counties had evacuation orders on Wednesday.

Southern Georgia and surrounding areas may also be impacted. Due to the storm’s fast pace, damage is also expected far inland, including in higher areas of the southern Appalachians.

What to Do

Residents near the Gulf, and especially in Florida, should monitor local channels for evacuation orders and other storm news, including watches and warnings.

If an evacuation is ordered, comply immediately. Learn your route now and discuss it with your household.

Prepare an evacuation kit (e.g., clothes, food, water, medications, physical maps, phone chargers, flashlights, etc.) when you can, in case it’s needed later.

If sheltering in place, you should still have emergency supplies on hand, such as potable water and food.

Florida residents can find more information about Hurricane Helene, including ways to seek assistance, on the [Florida Division of Emergency Management website](#).

Find additional information about the storm on the [National Hurricane Center website](#).

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