

= 1941 Texas hurricane =

The 1941 Texas hurricane , the second storm of the 1941 Atlantic hurricane season , was a large and intense tropical cyclone that struck coastal Texas as a major hurricane in September 1941 , causing relatively severe damage . The storm is estimated to have formed in the eastern Gulf of Mexico on September 16 . After attaining hurricane strength , it completed a clockwise loop and turned northwestward . The hurricane continued to strengthen until it made landfall near East Matagorda Bay , Texas , with winds of 125 miles per hour (201 km / h) , but rapidly weakened as it headed inland . Damage from the storm amounted to about \$ 6 @. @ 5 million , and crops throughout the region were largely destroyed . The city of Houston suffered extensive damage as the storm passed to the east . The hurricane disrupted activities related to the Louisiana Maneuvers . Later , the system became extratropical and passed over Lake Huron , killing three people in Toronto . Overall , seven people lost their lives due to the cyclone .

= Meteorological history =

In the middle of September , disturbed atmospheric conditions from a trough or tropical wave existed over the western Caribbean Sea and gradually coalesced near western Cuba on September 15 ? 16 . Even so , surrounding surface weather observations did not suggest that an area of low pressure had generated , but gradual organization continued until a tropical depression formed on September 17 in the central Gulf of Mexico about 120 miles (193 km) north of the Yucatán Peninsula . Operationally , the United States Weather Bureau failed to detect a tropical cyclone in the Gulf of Mexico until a day later . After formation , the system initially moved northwestward , a heading that continued early on September 18 . At that time , the system became a tropical storm more than 300 mi (483 km) to the south @- @ southeast of New Orleans , Louisiana .

Over the next three days , the intensifying storm executed a gradual clockwise loop , moving to the south @- @ southeast before turning back to the west . After intensifying into a hurricane on September 21 , the storm began assuming a more northwestward course , toward the Texas Gulf Coast . It continued to strengthen into a major hurricane , peaking at 125 miles per hour (201 km / h) late on September 23 . Just afterward , the storm went ashore east of Bay City , Texas , at peak intensity with an estimated central pressure of 942 millibars (27 @. @ 82 inHg) . However , few weather instruments were sited close to the point of landfall , so the lowest recorded pressure on land was only 970 @. @ 5 mb (28 @. @ 66 inHg) in Houston . After landfall , the cyclone curved to the northeast and passed just west of Houston early on September 24 . It accelerated as it continued to move inland and transitioned into an extratropical storm on September 25 . The post @- @ tropical system dissipated early on September 27 over northeastern Quebec , near the Torngat Mountains National Park .

= Preparations =

In advance of the storm , advisories and warnings were widely distributed by press , radio , telegraph and telephone . About 25 @, @ 000 residents evacuated their homes ; some small towns along the coast were described as " deserted " . People in low @- @ lying areas of coastal Louisiana sought shelter as storm surge from the hurricane affected the northern Gulf Coast . Residents in Texas prepared their homes and businesses for the hurricane , and boat owners pulled their craft out of the water . In Port Arthur , structures were boarded up and hundreds of refugees sought shelter in local hotels . American Red Cross workers were dispatched to the state . In Houston , a temporary hospital was erected . Police and firefighters in the city were put on alert . Vessels near the storm were advised to proceed with caution .

= Impact =

Overall damage from the storm totaled approximately \$ 7 million , of which about \$ 4 million can be

attributed to the destruction of crops , notably rice and cotton . The hurricane affected the southern Louisiana region one week before the Louisiana Maneuvers , a series of military exercises held during August and September 1941 . The exercise was designed to test US troop training , logistics , doctrine , and commanders and is considered a prelude to World War II . The rainfall triggered flooding and swelled rivers , and army vehicles became stuck in the mud as a result . Hundreds of military aircraft were forced to move inland for shelter .

Winds along the coast of Texas reached 100 mph (160 km / h) at numerous points near the hurricane 's center . A report from Galveston explained , " There was little characteristic sky appearance prior to the advent of the storm , the sky being mostly clear until lower clouds appeared suddenly between 6 and 7 a. m . C. S. T. , on the 22d with altocumulus and alto @-@ stratus overcast showing through breaks occasionally during the day . By late afternoon of the 22d the sky became completely overcast with low clouds of bad weather which predominated throughout the remainder of the storm . " Tides at the city , already slightly above @-@ normal due to a previous storm , rose to a crest of 7 ft (2 @. @ 1 m) on September 23 , flooding large portions of Galveston Island . A local airport was flooded with 1 to 3 ft (0 @. @ 30 to 0 @. @ 91 m) of tidewater .

As the hurricane moved inland , the city of Houston was hit especially hard . Three people in the area died and several others were injured . Winds blew at up to 77 mph (124 km / h) , catching many off @-@ guard after a previous forecast that deemed the region was safe . Some sections of the city were left without power . The winds destroyed poorly built structures and damaged others , and some streets were flooded . An athletic stadium was demolished by the storm , and glass windows were shattered in downtown stores . A preliminary estimate placed the damage in Houston at \$ 500 @, @ 000 . In the aftermath of the storm , fifteen truckloads of shattered glass were removed .

After spreading across the United States , the remnants moved through Ontario and Quebec , producing hurricane @-@ force wind gusts and 40 ft (12 m) waves along Lake Ontario . Throughout the lake , 55 vessels sunk due to the storm , resulting in tens of thousands of dollars in damage . High winds caused power outages and structural damage , as well as destroyed wheat fields across Ontario . In Toronto , the storm killed three people and injured others .