

= Hurricane Anita =

Hurricane Anita was a powerful Atlantic hurricane during an otherwise quiet 1977 Atlantic hurricane season . The first tropical cyclone of the season , Anita developed from a tropical wave on August 29 in the north @-@ central Gulf of Mexico . It tracked westward into an area with conditions favorable for further development , and quickly intensified into a hurricane by late on August 30 . Initially , Anita was forecast to strike Texas , though a building ridge turned it to the west @-@ southwest . The hurricane rapidly strengthened to attain peak winds of 175 mph (280 km / h) , and on September 2 Anita made landfall in eastern Tamaulipas as a Category 5 hurricane . It quickly weakened as it crossed Mexico , and after briefly redeveloping into a tropical depression in the eastern Pacific Ocean , Anita dissipated on September 4 to the south of the Baja California Peninsula .

The hurricane produced light rainfall and high tides along the Gulf Coast of the United States . Some low @-@ level flooding was reported , but damage was slight . In Mexico , the hurricane caused strong winds and moderate rainfall . The winds caused extensive damage to villages in northeastern Mexico , with about 25 @, @ 000 people left homeless . The rainfall , reaching over 17 @. @ 52 inches (445 mm) , caused flooding and mudslides which killed eleven people in Tamaulipas . Overall damage is unknown .

= = Storm history = =

A tropical wave moved off the coast of Africa on August 16 . The wave axis tracked steadily westward , and on August 23 convection increased after the wave passed beneath a cold @-@ core upper @-@ level low . By August 27 , the wave axis was located over Cuba , with the area of convection located between Florida and the Bahamas after tracking northwestward . The disturbance crossed southern Florida , and after entering the Gulf of Mexico an anticyclone provided favorable conditions for further development . It tracked slowly westward at 5 mph (7 km / h) , and after developing a surface circulation the system developed into a tropical depression on August 29 while located about 230 miles (370 km) south @-@ southwest of New Orleans , Louisiana .

With a ridge of high pressure to its north , the depression tracked westward . Favorable conditions persisted for several days prior to the arrival of the depression , and as such the depression quickly intensified into Tropical Storm Anita . The storm tracked slowly over warm water temperatures , and throughout its duration it was embedded within warm , moist tropical air ; Anita rapidly organized and attained hurricane status late on August 30 ; this is the latest date for the first hurricane since 1967 . Initially it threatened to strike Texas , though building high pressures to the north of the hurricane turned Anita to the west @-@ southwest . The hurricane developed a well @-@ defined eye , and Hurricane Anita began to rapidly intensify late on September 1 after attaining major hurricane status . During a two @-@ day period up to its peak intensity , Anita deepened at a rate of 2 mbar per hour , and on September 2 the hurricane reached peak winds of 175 mph (280 km / h) while located just offshore northeastern Mexico , making Anita a Category 5 on the Saffir @-@ Simpson Hurricane Scale .

Hurricane Anita maintained its strength as it approached land , and at 1100 UTC on September 2 it made landfall on Soto la Marina , Tamaulipas , about 145 miles (235 km) south of Brownsville , Texas or 80 miles (130 km) north of Tampico , Mexico . Moving ashore with a pressure of 926 mbar , Anita was the third most intense tropical cyclone to strike the nation , and was the most intense hurricane to hit from the Gulf of Mexico . It rapidly weakened over the mountainous terrain of Mexico , and on September 3 , about 25 hours after moving ashore , Anita emerged into the eastern Pacific Ocean as a tropical depression . Reclassified as Tropical Depression Eleven , the system continued to the west , and weakened further after encountering cooler water temperatures . The depression gradually lost its deep convection , and on September 4 it dissipated off of the southern tip of the Baja California Peninsula .

= = Preparations = =

Shortly after first developing , one oil company evacuated its oil rigs off of Texas and Louisiana by helicopter , with several other companies beginning to evacuate unneeded workers . Ultimately , 7 @, @ 000 oil workers were removed from offshore oil platforms . The threat of the developing disturbance prompted officials to close a state park in southern Louisiana . The National Hurricane Center advised small craft along the northern Gulf Coast to remain at port . Initially , Anita was predicted to continue tracking west @-@ northwestward and make landfall near the Texas / Louisiana border . As a result , schools in Cameron Parish , Louisiana were closed , and on August 30 a hurricane watch was issued for the southwestern Louisiana and northeastern Texas coastlines . After the track shifted further to the south , the watch was replaced with a hurricane warning between Brownsville and just south of Corpus Christi , Texas . An emergency shelter was opened in Brownwood , Texas , and Army trucks were prepared to assist in evacuations . An official from the National Weather Service recommended evacuation for all residents east of Galveston , Texas living in an area below 5 feet (1 @. @ 5 m) above sea level ; about 20 @, @ 000 left Cameron , Louisiana . In all , about 58 @, @ 000 people evacuated coastal locations in Louisiana and Texas .

Though the National Hurricane Center did not issue hurricane warnings for Mexico , officials warned the Mexican government of the potential danger of the hurricane . Across the northeastern coastline of the country , 35 @, @ 000 people evacuated prior to the arrival of the hurricane , including all of the residents in the village where the hurricane struck . The Mexican army assisted in evacuations and preparing emergency shelters .

= = Impact = =

= = = United States = = =

As the precursor tropical disturbance crossed southern Florida , it dropped light rainfall of over 1 inch (25 mm) in the Miami area . Later , as a developing tropical depression , the system produced gusty winds and heavy rainfall in southern Louisiana ; one station near Galliano reported over 3 inches (76 mm) of precipitation . Hurricane Anita produced a storm tide of 2 feet (0 @. @ 6 m) above normal in Grand Isle , which resulted in hundreds of families being asked to leave their homes .

The hurricane produced above @-@ normal tides along the Texas coastline , which closed several highways including Texas State Highway 87 . The northern periphery of Hurricane Anita produced light to moderate rainfall across the southern portion of the state , which peaked at 4 @. @ 97 inches (126 mm) at Rio Grande City . Damage in the state was minor ; on South Padre Island damage was limited to a few broken windows .

= = = Mexico = = =

Hurricane Anita made landfall in a sparsely populated portion of Mexico ; as a result , few meteorological statistics exist . A station near where the hurricane moved ashore recorded 17 @. @ 52 inches (445 mm) of precipitation in six hours , which resulted in severe flooding and mudslides . Winds along the eastern Mexico coastline were estimated at over 100 mph (160 km / h) .

The hurricane caused extensive damage to fishing and farming communities in northeastern Mexico . Strong winds destroyed thousands of homes and left about 25 @, @ 000 people homeless , according to newspaper reports from Mexico City . The winds destroyed the roofs of most buildings near where the hurricane moved ashore , and also caused widespread power outages which disrupted communications . Heavy rainfall destroyed or obstructed roadways across the region , with some flooded avenues in Tampico and reports of flooded highways near Ciudad Victoria . Eleven people were killed in floods and mudslides across Tamaulipas . In all , at least 50 @, @ 000 people were affected by the hurricane in Mexico .

= = Aftermath = =

The name Anita was retired following this storm , and will never be used for an Atlantic hurricane again . Shortly after the hurricane made landfall , the government of Mexico sent two trucks of food to the areas of greatest impact . Additionally , officials permitted full use of the Mexican railway system to facilitate the distribution of aid . Three municipalities were also declared disaster areas following the storm . In Texas , the combination of moderate rainfall and high tides into low @-@ lying marshland led to a mosquito outbreak near Galveston following the storm .