Hurricane Cindy (2005)

Hurricane Cindy was a tropical cyclone that briefly reached minimal hurricane strength in the Gulf of Mexico during July in the 2005 Atlantic hurricane season and made landfall in Louisiana . It was the third named storm and first hurricane of the season . Cindy was originally thought to have been a tropical storm at peak strength , but was upgraded to a Category 1 hurricane in the post @-@ storm analysis .

Hurricane Cindy initially formed on July 3 just east of the Yucatán Peninsula in the Caribbean Sea . The depression soon made landfall on the peninsula and weakened before reemerging in the Gulf of Mexico on July 4 . The storm strengthened as it moved north becoming a hurricane just before making landfall near Grand Isle , Louisiana , on July 5 . The storm weakened as it moved overland and became extratropical on July 7 .

Hurricane Cindy was responsible for 3 deaths in the United States and brought heavy rains to Louisiana , Mississippi , Alabama and Maryland . An unusually strong F2 tornado was spawned from Cindy 's remnants and caused severe damage in Hampton , Georgia . Cindy also caused flooding and a severe blackout in New Orleans , Louisiana , which encouraged the population to evacuate when Hurricane Katrina approached the city the next month .

Meteorological history

On June 24 a vigorous tropical wave moved off the African coast and quickly west across the Atlantic without developing . The wave gradually became more organized as it crossed the Caribbean and late on July 3 it strengthened into Tropical Depression Three about 80 miles (130 km) east of Chetumal , Mexico . The models initially had difficulty predicting the track of the depression and the forecasts from the National Hurricane Center reflected this , indicating that the depression would move towards Texas . The depression developed quickly before making landfall on Yucatán Peninsula early on July 4 with 35 mph (55 km / h) winds and began to lose its circulation overland .

A new center of circulation began forming later on July 4 , over the Gulf of Mexico , to the north of the original center . This reformation caused a significant alteration in the forecast models , which now indicated a landfall in Louisiana . The depression moved northwards into the Gulf of Mexico and became a Tropical Storm Cindy early on July 5 . Weakened shear allowed Cindy to strengthen further as it approached Louisiana and the storm was a minimal hurricane with 75 mph (120 km / h) winds when it made landfall near Grand Isle late on July 5 . Initially it was felt that Cindy did not reach hurricane strength , but post @-@ season reanalysis confirmed the upgrade to Category 1 status .

Hurricane Cindy weakened back into a tropical storm as it crossed over extreme southeastern Louisiana and Breton Sound before making a second landfall near Waveland , Mississippi with 50 mph (85 km / h) winds on July 6 . Cindy moved to the northeast over Mississippi and Alabama , weakening to a tropical depression that day . The depression became extratropical over the Carolinas on July 7 and moved to the northeast dissipating in the Gulf of St Lawrence on July 9 .

Preparations

Upon being declared a tropical depression , meteorologists in Mexico began advising residents about the possibility of heavy rainfall across the Yucatán Peninsula .

The National Hurricane Center issued a Tropical Storm Warning from Morgan City , Louisiana to Destin , Florida , and both tourists and residents evacuated the Louisiana and Florida coasts . Workers were evacuated from six oil rigs in the storm 's path , and 23 coastal refineries stopped unloading oil as Cindy 's approach made such activities dangerous . Numerous flights in and out of New Orleans were cancelled and Amtrak suspended passenger rail service until after the storm passed . Recreational vehicles were told to leave Grand Isle in case a full @-@ scale evacuation was needed . In Mississippi , jail inmates filled sandbags which would be distributed to flood prone

areas throughout the state .

= = Impact = =

 Five deaths were attributed to Cindy , none of them near the storm 's landfall . Two people were killed in Georgia , one in Alabama , and two in Maryland . Approximately 300 @,@ 000 homes and businesses in southeast Louisiana and the Mississippi Gulf Coast lost electrical power and a storm surge of 4 ? 6 feet (1 @.@ 2 @-@ 1 @.@ 8 m) affected the same area , causing some beach erosion near Grand Isle , Louisiana . Hurricane Cindy 's total damage was estimated to be US $ 320 million .
 In New Orleans , Louisiana , wind gusts reached 70 mph (110 km / h) , many trees were damaged or uprooted and scattered street flooding was reported . As thousands lost electrical power , the city experienced its worst blackout since Hurricane Betsy 40 years earlier . Although still listed as a " Tropical Storm " by the weather service at the time , many laypeople in New Orleans were under the impression that Cindy was a hurricane , and referred to it as " Hurricane Cindy " before it was officially upgraded . Many people in the New Orleans metropolitan area expected minimal effects from the storm , but were cleaning up debris and were without power for days after Cindy 's passage . In Louisiana , 260 @,@ 000 residences were left without power .
 Even though it had weakened to a depression when it moved inland , Cindy 's effects were still significant across the final portion of its track . The day after its landfall in southeastern Louisiana , Tropical Depression Cindy reached central Alabama . There its rainbands produced heavy rainfall and eight tornadoes . Damage was mostly limited to trees and powerlines , but an F1 tornado in Macon county injured one man , destroyed an auto @-@ repair shop , and damaged several nearby cars . About 35 @,@ 000 residences in Alabama and 7 @,@ 000 in both Florida and Mississippi were left without power following the storm .
 In Georgia , some parts of Atlanta Motor Speedway and Tara Field airport in Hampton , Georgia suffered US $ 40 million damage from an F2 tornado spawned by the storm . An F1 tornado in Fayette county damaged three homes and caused an estimated US $ 3 million of damage . Four other tornadoes were confirmed across the state , although none of them caused significant damage . Hartsfield @-@ Jackson Atlanta International Airport in Atlanta recorded over 5 inches (130 mm) of rain on July 6 , its sixth @-@ highest one @-@ day rainfall since records began in 1878 ; most of the rain fell during just two hours (8 ? 10 p.m. EDT) . This is more rain than the area normally gets in all of July .
 Cindy 's remnant low moving across western and northern North Carolina combined with a frontal boundary to produce several supercell thunderstorms . These supercells spawned a number of tornadoes in western North Carolina , at the foothills of the Appalachian mountains , but their effects were minimal . Continuing north , Cindy brought over 5 in (125 mm) of rain to areas as distant as Salisbury , Maryland .