

= Hurricane Hiki =

Hurricane Hiki was the wettest tropical cyclone on record in the United States . It was also considered the first official hurricane in the vicinity of the Hawaiian Islands . The fourth tropical cyclone of the 1950 Pacific hurricane season , Hiki formed as a tropical depression to the southeast of Hawaii on August 12 . On the following day , the depression headed northwestward and intensified into Tropical Storm Hiki . While paralleling the Hawaiian Islands on August 16 , Hiki strengthened into a hurricane . Around that time , the storm peaked with maximum sustained winds of 85 mph (140 km / h) . The following day , Hiki curved southwestward on August 17 . Two days later , the hurricane resumed moving northwestward and weakened to a tropical storm shortly thereafter . Around midday on August 21 , Hiki weakened to a tropical depression and dissipated about six hours later .

Although Hiki was a small tropical cyclone and bypassed Hawaii , heavy rainfall and strong winds were observed throughout the islands . At the Kanaloa Ranger Station on Kauai , 52 inches (1 @, @ 300 mm) of precipitation was observed , which was the highest total associated with a tropical cyclone on record in the United States . The Waimea River overflowed , causing more than 200 residents to flee their homes . Many streets and several hundred acres of sugar cane fields were flooded . About \$ 200 @, @ 000 (1950 USD) in damage was reported due to flooding in the city of Waimea . In Kekaha , the powerhouse suffered severe damage . Throughout the islands , winds de @-@ roofed several homes and downed power lines ; one fatality occurred after a person came in contact with a live wire .

= Meteorological history =

According to ship reports during the summer , the Intertropical Convergence Zone was farther north than usual , which created favorable conditions for tropical cyclogenesis . Weather charts at the Honolulu International Airport , a tropical depression developed at 00 : 00 UTC on August 12 , while located about 760 miles (1 @, @ 220 km) southeast of the Big Island . Thereafter , the storm gradually intensified , becoming a tropical storm at 06 : 00 UTC on August 13 . It was named Hiki , which is Hawaiian for Able . While situated east of Hilo , Hawaii , the system was described as an " immature storm " , and had a very small diameter . Shortly thereafter , a reconnaissance aircraft flew into Hiki and estimated that sustained wind speeds between 50 and 60 mph (80 and 100 km / h) . Further intensification continued and the system strengthened into a hurricane on August 16 . Upon reaching hurricane intensity on August 16 , Hiki simultaneously attained its maximum sustained wind speed of 85 mph (140 km / h) . Despite this , the storm had remained small , with gale force winds extending less than 150 mi (240 km) from the center . Hiki remained between 100 and 200 mi (160 and 320 km) offshore while paralleling several Hawaiian Islands , including Hawaii , Maui , Molokai , Oahu , and Kauai .

As a high pressure ridge intensified , the northwestward movement of Hiki was blocked , causing the storm to briefly turn due west on August 17 . The high pressure ridge eventually influenced the hurricane to re @-@ curve southwestward . On August 18 , a reconnaissance aircraft observed sustained winds of 90 mph (150 km / h) to the south of the center ; a minimum barometric pressure of 982 mbar (29 @. @ 0 inHg) was also observed . After the reconnaissance aircraft flight into the storm on August 18 , residents of Kauai and Oahu were alerted of a possible cyclonic loop . However , later that day , the high pressure ridge weakened , causing Hiki to turned westward and pass south of French Frigate Shoals and Midway Island . Late on August 19 , Hiki weakened to a tropical storm and then resumed its course to the northwest . By August 21 , Hiki further weakened to a tropical depression , and dissipated six hours later .

The hurricane was also followed by the Air Weather Service , located on Guam , who assigned the name Salome from the Pacific typhoon naming lists .

= Preparations and impact =

Hiki was one of the strongest tropical cyclones to approach the Hawaiian Islands in at least 45 years and officially the first hurricane in the region . As Hiki approached , a United States Coast Guard station with 14 people in French Frigate Shoals was alerted . In addition , ships in the area were also advised to take caution . Hiki caused high waves on some of the Hawaiian Islands . Hawaii remained on the southern semicircle of Hiki , and as a result , light wind damage occurred . The highest reported winds from Hiki was at the Kilauea Lighthouse on Kauai , where gusts up to 68 mph (109 km / h) were observed . The islands of Niihau and Lanai also experienced tropical storm force winds , reaching 48 and 50 mph (77 and 80 km / h) , respectively . As a result , several houses throughout the Hawaiian Islands lost their roof . In addition , a farmer in Kohala on Hawaii died after coming into contact with a live wire that was blown down from high winds .

Hiki was the wettest tropical cyclone in United States history , as rainfall of over 52 in (1 @, @ 300 mm) observed at the Kanalohuluhulu Ranger Station on Kauai between August 14 and August 18 . The rain gauge was capable of holding 24 inches (610 mm) of the rain and was emptied on August 15 . However , less than 24 hours later , the same rain gauge was overflowing . Heavy precipitation was also recorded on other locations on that island , including 13 inches (330 mm) on Mount Waialeale . Few reports exist on rainfall totals on other Hawaiian Islands , with the only other island recording rainfall was Maui , with precipitation reaching 11 @. @ 9 inches (300 mm) on August 15 . This was the highest 24 ? hour record for that island in the month of August . On Kauai , the Waimea River experienced one of the worst flood in its history , causing more than 200 residents in Waimea Valley to evacuate . The river also rose near the mouth of its tributary , the Makaweli River , flooding the town of Waimea , causing about \$ 200 @, @ 000 in damage . The streets on the island and hundreds of acres of sugar cane were flooded . Additionally , severe damage was reported at the Kekaha Powerhouse .