

= Hurricane Babe =

Hurricane Babe was the second named storm and the first to impact the United States during the below @-@ average 1977 Atlantic hurricane season . Forming out of a tropical wave on September 3 , Babe began as a subtropical cyclone in the eastern Gulf of Mexico . The storm gradually intensified as it tracked westward . On September 5 , the storm turned north and acquired enough tropical characteristics . Later that day , Babe intensified into a hurricane and attained its peak strength with winds of 75 mph (120 km / h) and a barometric pressure of 995 mbar (hPa ; 29 @.@ 38 inHg) . Several hours later , the hurricane made landfall in Louisiana and quickly weakened . By September 6 , Babe had weakened to a tropical depression and later dissipated early on September 9 over North Carolina .

Hurricane Babe produced minimal impact throughout its path in the United States . The most significant impact occurred in Louisiana where the storm caused \$ 10 million (1977 USD ; \$ 39 million 2016 USD) in damage , mainly from crop losses . An additional \$ 3 million (1977 USD ; \$ 11 @.@ 7 million 2016 USD) in losses resulted from tornadoes spawned by Babe . Heavy rainfall in North Carolina , peaking at 8 @.@ 99 in (228 mm) triggered flash flooding but little damage . No fatalities resulted from the hurricane . Coincidentally , a typhoon , also named Babe , existed at exactly the same time as Hurricane Babe .

= = Meteorological history = =

Hurricane Babe originated from a tropical wave that exited the western coast of Africa on August 23 . Tracking westward , the wave eventually entered the Gulf of Mexico on September 2 . Upon entering the gulf , a surface circulation developed ; however , convection associated with the system was not concentrated around the center . The newly formed system then interacted with an upper tropospheric cyclonic vortex situated near the Florida coastline . The following day , Convective banding features around the cyclone led to the National Hurricane Center (NHC) upgrading the system to Tropical Storm Babe . Although classified a tropical storm , Babe was not fully tropical , it was later classified as a subtropical cyclone . The forward motion of Babe had slowed significantly from when it was a wave but maintained the westward direction .

By September 4 , the maximum winds were found closer to the center of circulation and the cyclone developed a warmer core , a main feature in tropical cyclones . An anticyclone also developed over Babe and later that day , the storm transitioned into a tropical cyclone . By this time , Babe had turned nearly due north and was near hurricane @-@ status . Around this time , reconnaissance missions into the storm found a closed eyewall with an eye measuring roughly 23 mi (37 km) in diameter . Another reconnaissance flight that day found sustained winds of 80 mph (130 km / h) ; however , these winds were located roughly 65 mi (100 km) from the center and considered to be unrepresentative of the storm 's actual intensity .

Early on September 5 , reconnaissance found a central barometric pressure of 995 mbar (hPa ; 29 @.@ 38 inHg) , the lowest recorded in relation to the storm . Around this time , Babe also intensified into a hurricane , attaining maximum winds of 75 mph (120 km / h) . Later that day , Hurricane Babe made landfall near Cocodrie , Louisiana and quickly weakened to a tropical storm . By landfall , the eye of Babe had contracted to roughly 14 mi (23 km) . On September 6 , the storm had weakened to a tropical depression and was moving northeast into Mississippi . The system continued this movement for the following two days . While crossing South Carolina , forecasters thought that the system would emerge into the Atlantic Ocean and regenerate into a tropical depression . However , the remnants of Babe dissipated shortly before crossing into North Carolina early on September 9 .

= = Preparations = =

Upon the storm 's formation on September 3 , gale warnings were issued for areas along the north @-@ central coast of the Gulf of Mexico . By September 5 , hurricane warnings were posted for

areas between Vermilion Bay to the mouth of the Mississippi River in Louisiana . These warnings were later discontinued as the system moved over land . Ahead of the storm , up to 30 @, @ 000 residents in low @-@ lying parts of the state moved inland . However , press reports indicate that upwards of 45 @, @ 000 residents had evacuated from coastal regions prior to the storm . In Grand Isle , roughly 200 civil defense workers stayed behind in the town hall after the cities 2 @, @ 300 residents evacuated . In Cameron Parish , roughly 8 @, @ 000 residents evacuated inland . Emergency shelters were set up throughout Louisiana to house evacuees during the storm . As Hurricane Babe began to weaken over Louisiana , forecasters anticipated the formation of tornadoes and issued tornado watches for parts of Louisiana , Alabama , Mississippi , Georgia and Florida .

= = Impact = =

Prior to becoming a subtropical depression , Babe produced scattered rainfall in Florida , with peak amounts near 3 in (76 mm) falling around Lake Okeechobee . Widespread rain fell in relation to Babe throughout the Southern United States . In Louisiana , rain was confined to eastern parts of the state , with up to 10 in (250 mm) being measured near the Mississippi border . The remnants of the hurricane continued to produce heavy rain through its dissipation over North Carolina . A storm peak of 10 @. @ 99 in (279 mm) fell in Lafayette , Georgia . Most of North Carolina received between 3 and 5 in (76 and 127 mm) of rain with isolated areas exceeding 7 in (180 mm) . A state maximum of 8 @. @ 99 in (228 mm) fell in Lake Toxaway , North Carolina , 7 @. @ 05 in (179 mm) in Caesars Head , South Carolina and 6 @. @ 62 in (168 mm) in Chattanooga , Tennessee .

Upon making landfall , Babe produced a storm surge of 5 ft (1 @. @ 5 m) , leading to minor coastal flooding . Due to the storm 's quick deterioration after moving inland , the NHC presumed that hurricane @-@ force winds did not impact land . The highest wind gust was recorded in Grand Isle , Louisiana at 50 mph (85 km / h) and the highest sustained wind was recorded in Boothville , Louisiana at 45 mph (75 km / h) . In Jean Lafitte , Louisiana , overflow from the Fleming Canal produced flooding throughout the area . The most significant damage was to croplands inundated by flood waters . Flash flooding occurred throughout the path of the former hurricane in the eastern United States , particularly in North Carolina .

Hurricane Babe produced 14 tornadoes between September 5 and 7 along its track in several states . Louisiana recorded the most , with six touchdowns , including one F2 that injured one person and caused \$ 2 @. @ 5 million (1977 USD ; \$ 9 @. @ 76 million 2016 USD) in damages near Hammond in Tangipahoa Parish . A country store sustained severe damage from the tornado , with most of the back of the store destroyed . Six wood @-@ frame homes were also knocked off their cinder block supports . Another F2 touched down in Tuscaloosa County , Alabama ; however , minimal damage was recorded along its 8 mi (13 km) track . Another F2 briefly touched down in Harrison County , Mississippi on September 6 . It struck an unoccupied elementary school , wrecking six classrooms and leaving \$ 500 @, @ 000 (1977 USD ; \$ 1 @. @ 95 million 2016 USD) in damages . Throughout the storm 's path , damages amounted to \$ 10 million (1977 USD ; \$ 39 million 2016 USD) with an additional \$ 3 million (1977 USD ; \$ 11 @. @ 7 million 2016 USD) from tornadoes . There was no loss of life due to Babe .