

= Hurricane Diane =

Hurricane Diane was the costliest Atlantic hurricane of its time . One of three hurricanes to hit North Carolina during the 1955 Atlantic hurricane season , it formed on August 7 from a tropical wave between the Lesser Antilles and Cape Verde . Diane initially moved west @-@ northwestward with little change in its intensity , but began to strengthen rapidly after turning to the north @-@ northeast . On August 12 , the hurricane reached peak sustained winds of 105 mph (170 km / h) , making it a Category 2 hurricane . Gradually weakening after veering back west , Diane made landfall near Wilmington , North Carolina , as a strong tropical storm on August 17 , just five days after Hurricane Connie struck near the same area . Diane weakened further after moving inland , at which point the United States Weather Bureau noted a decreased threat of further destruction . The storm turned to the northeast , and warm waters from the Atlantic Ocean helped produce record rainfall across the northeastern United States . On August 19 , Diane emerged into the Atlantic Ocean southeast of New York City , becoming extratropical two days later and completely dissipating by August 23 .

The first area affected by Diane was North Carolina , which suffered coastal flooding but little wind and rain damage . After the storm weakened in Virginia , it maintained an area of moisture that resulted in heavy rainfall after interacting with the Blue Ridge Mountains , a process known as orographic lift . Flooding affected roads and low @-@ lying areas along the Potomac River . The northernmost portion of Delaware also saw freshwater flooding , although to a much lesser extent than adjacent states . Diane produced heavy rainfall in eastern Pennsylvania , causing the worst floods on record there , largely in the Poconos and along the Delaware River . Rushing waters demolished about 150 road and rail bridges and breached or destroyed 30 dams . The swollen Brodhead Creek virtually submerged a summer camp , killing 37 people . Throughout Pennsylvania , the disaster killed 101 people and caused an estimated \$ 70 million in damage (1955 USD) . Additional flooding spread through the northwest portion of neighboring New Jersey , forcing hundreds of people to evacuate and destroying several bridges , including one built in 1831 . Storm damage was evident but less significant in southeastern New York .

Damage from Diane was heaviest in Connecticut , where rainfall peaked at 16 @.@ 86 in (428 mm) near Torrington . The storm produced the state 's largest flood on record , which effectively split the state into two by destroying bridges and cutting communications . All major streams and valleys were flooded , and 30 stream gauges reported their highest levels on record . The Connecticut River at Hartford reached a water level of 30 @.@ 6 ft (9 @.@ 3 m) , the third highest on record there . The flooding destroyed a large section of downtown Winsted , much of which was never rebuilt . Record @-@ high tides and flooded rivers heavily damaged Woonsocket , Rhode Island . In Massachusetts , flood water levels surpassed those during the 1938 Long Island hurricane , breaching multiple dams and inundating adjacent towns and roads . Throughout New England , 206 dams were damaged or destroyed , and about 7 @,@ 000 people were injured . Nationwide , Diane killed at least 184 people and destroyed 813 houses , with another 14 @,@ 000 homes heavily damaged . Monetary losses totaled \$ 754 @.@ 7 million , although the inclusion of loss of business and personal revenue increased the total to over \$ 1 billion . In the hurricane 's wake , eight states were declared federal disaster areas , and the name Diane was retired .

= = Meteorological history = =

Hurricane Diane originated in a tropical wave first observed as a tropical depression on August 7 between the Lesser Antilles and Cape Verde . The system moved generally to the west @-@ northwest , intensifying into a tropical storm on August 9 . By the time the Weather Bureau first classified the storm on August 10 , Diane was south of the Bermuda high , a semi @-@ permanent ridge in the jet stream just east of Nova Scotia . Ships in the region of the storm reported winds of 45 mph (72 km / h) . During the next day , the Hurricane Hunters reported no increase in strength , and Diane initially remained disorganized . The storm interacted with Hurricane Connie to its northwest in a process known as the Fujiwhara effect , in which Diane turned toward the north . Quick intensification ensued , potentially due to interaction with a cold @-@ core low that increased

atmospheric instability . On August 12 , the storm rapidly intensified into a hurricane . The intensification was so quick that a ship southeast of the center believed Diane was undergoing a loop due to a steady drop in barometric pressure , despite moving away from the hurricane .

At its peak , Diane developed a well @-@ defined eye about 30 mi (48 km) in diameter , described by reconnaissance aircraft as taking the shape of an " inverted teacup " . The strongest winds were located in the northeast quadrant , where there was a secondary pressure minimum located 62 mi (100 km) northeast of the eye . After moving to the north for about a day , Diane resumed its westward motion on August 13 , after Hurricane Connie to the northwest had weakened . That day , Diane reached its lowest pressure of 969 mbar (28 @.@ 6 inHg) , and peak winds of 105 mph (170 km / h) ; originally the hurricane was analyzed to reach peak winds of 120 mph (195 km / h) , although the large size and slow forward speed suggested the lower winds . It maintained its peak winds for about 12 hours , after which it weakened due to cooler air in the region . By August 15 , the eye had become poorly defined , and winds steadily weakened . As it approached land , its center deteriorated , with minimal precipitation near the center ; the eye was observed on a radar installed in July 1955 . On August 17 , Diane made landfall on the coast of North Carolina near Wilmington . Pressure at landfall was estimated at 986 millibars (29 @.@ 1 inHg) , accompanied by winds just under hurricane intensity . Diane struck the state only five days after Hurricane Connie struck the same general area .

Diane quickly weakened as a tropical storm over the mountainous terrain of central North Carolina . The associated area of precipitation expanded and spread away from the center to the north and northeast . The weakening system turned to the north and recurved toward the northeast through Virginia after a ridge built in from the west . It did not interact much with the non @-@ tropical westerlies , and as a result it remained a distinct tropical cyclone over land . Convection redeveloped as the storm approached the Atlantic coast once again . Diane passed through the Mid @-@ Atlantic states , exiting New Jersey on August 19 into the Atlantic Ocean southeast of New York City . Paralleling the southern coast of New England , the storm later accelerated east @-@ northeastward , becoming extratropical on August 21 . Passing south and east of Newfoundland , the remnants of Diane accelerated and restrengthened slightly while moving to the northeast . Late on August 23 , the storm dissipated between Greenland and Iceland .

= = Preparations and background = =

Late on August 14 , more than two days before Diane made landfall , the United States Weather Bureau issued a hurricane alert from Georgia through North Carolina . On August 15 , the agency issued a hurricane warning from Brunswick , Georgia to Wilmington , North Carolina , although the warning was later extended to the south and north to Fernandina , Florida and Cape Hatteras , North Carolina , respectively . The agency also issued storm warnings southward to Saint Augustine , Florida and northward to Atlantic City , New Jersey , including the Chesapeake and Delaware bays . Throughout the warned region , small ships were advised to remain at port . Before Diane made landfall , the North Carolina National Guard assisted in evacuating people near the Pamlico River , and 700 residents left their homes near New Bern ; thousands of tourists also evacuated . The threat of the hurricane forced the planned retirement ceremony for Admiral Robert Carney to be transferred from an aircraft carrier in Norfolk , Virginia to an academy dormitory . All aircraft at Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point were flown to safer locations further inland .

All hurricane warnings were dropped after Diane moved inland . Forecasters downplayed the threat of Diane after it weakened over Virginia ; the Weather Bureau agreed they did not foresee the extent of the rain that would occur , instead calling for just " some local flooding " . The agency later admitted they " goofed " in downplaying the storm 's destructive potential after weakening , noting their lack of experience with extreme rainfall events . Once the storm moved ashore , the Weather Bureau transferred official forecasting duties to regional offices , and local newspapers also issued their own forecasts . The Springfield Daily News in Massachusetts noted that " moderate rains [were] possible " in its daily weather forecast ahead of the storm . Still , flood warnings were issued , with stream flooding forecasts of over 12 hours in advance . Along smaller rivers , including the

Lehigh , Schuylkill , and Farmington , forecasts were issued every few hours .

In the summer of 1955 , the eastern United States experienced generally hot and dry weather , leading to drought conditions and decreased water levels . When Hurricane Connie struck , its rainfall moistened the soil and heightened creeks throughout the Mid @-@ Atlantic and New England . Hurricane Diane struck North Carolina just five days later and affected the same general area . After floods in 1936 , the United States federal government enacted plans to prevent future devastating floods , although they made no progress by the time Connie and Diane struck in 1955 . Along the Delaware River in the 1930s , state legislatures in New Jersey and Pennsylvania had established a commission that worked to clean up polluted water , but the legislators and commission blocked federal help , comparing it to European socialism ; this was in contrast to the federally funded Tennessee Valley Authority , which mitigated flooding along the Tennessee River .

= = Impact = =

Hurricane Diane 's path over the eastern United States brought heavy rainfall , fueled by unusually moist air resulting from abnormally high sea surface temperatures . The worst flooding was in eastern Pennsylvania , northern New Jersey , southeastern New York , and southern New England . Of the 287 stream gauges in the region , 129 reported record levels during the course of the event . Many streams reported discharge rates of more than double the previous records . Most of the flooding occurred along small rivers that rose to flood stage within hours , largely impacting populated areas ; there were around 30 million people in the region affected by the floods . Overall , 813 houses were destroyed , with 14 @,@ 000 heavily damaged . The floods severed infrastructure and affected several summer camps . Damage to public utilities was estimated at \$ 79 million . Flooding in rural areas resulted in landslides in the mountains , while destroyed crops cost an estimated \$ 7 million . Hundreds of miles of roads and bridges were also destroyed , accounting for \$ 82 million in damage . Damage from Diane 's winds were generally minor . The hurricane caused \$ 754 @,@ 706 @,@ 000 in damage (1955 USD) , of which \$ 600 million was in New England , making it the costliest hurricane in American history at the time . Taking into account indirect losses , such as loss of wages and business earnings , Diane was described as " the first billion dollar hurricane . " This contributed to 1955 being the costliest Atlantic hurricane season on record at the time . Overall , there were at least 184 deaths , potentially as many as 200 .

= = = Carolinas = = =

The strongest sustained winds associated with Diane 's landfall in North Carolina reached 50 mph (80 km / h) in Hatteras , with gusts to 74 mph (119 km / h) in Wilmington . Any hurricane @-@ force gusts were likely very sporadic and isolated in nature . Tides ran 6 to 8 ft (1 @.@ 8 to 2 @.@ 4 m) above normal near Wilmington , and waves 12 ft (3 @.@ 7 m) in height struck the coast . The resultant storm surge damaged beach houses , flooded coastal roads , and destroyed seawalls damaged by Hurricane Connie a few days prior . The center of the hurricane passed over Wilmington without much of a decrease in winds , suggesting the eye was disorganized or even nonexistent . Little precipitation fell in and around the city , though precipitation was more substantial elsewhere in the state , peaking at 7 @.@ 04 in (179 mm) in New Bern . At Oakway in neighboring South Carolina , rainfall amounted to 2 @.@ 39 in (61 mm) .

= = = Mid @-@ Atlantic = = =

After Diane crossed into Virginia , it dropped heavy rainfall of over 10 in (250 mm) in 24 hours in the Blue Ridge Mountains , peaking at 11 @.@ 72 in (298 mm) in Big Meadows . There , the rains were enhanced by moist air rising over the mountain peaks and condensing , a process known as orographic lift . Rainfall of over 3 in (76 mm) occurred throughout Virginia , as well as into the Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia , where 5 @.@ 71 in (145 mm) was reported at Stony River Reservoir . Similar precipitation amounts fell through Delaware , including 3 @.@ 27 in (83 mm) at

the National Arboretum in Washington , D.C. Rivers across the region rose above flood stage , including the James River which crested at 30 @. @ 4 ft (9 @. @ 3 m) in Columbia , Virginia , which was 14 @. @ 6 ft (4 @. @ 5 m) above flood stage . High amounts of rainfall accrued in eastern Pennsylvania , peaking at 11 @. @ 11 in (282 mm) in Pecks Pond in the northeast portion of the state . As with Virginia , the heaviest rainfall occurred due to orographic lift near a mountain . In neighboring New Jersey , the highest precipitation was 8 @. @ 10 in (206 mm) near Sussex . Rainfall in New York peaked at 9 @. @ 05 in (230 mm) in Lake Mohonk .

In Virginia , severe flooding occurred near Richmond and along the Blue Ridge Mountains . Near the coast , Diane damaged large areas of farmlands due to slow @-@ moving floods . In the state , 21 gauges reported their highest levels on record . High levels along the Potomac River flooded low @-@ lying portions of Virginia and Washington , D.C. Wind gusts reached 62 mph (100 km / h) in Roanoke . In the state , flooding covered several roads , prompting closures . Due to the flat terrain , flooding in Delaware was described by the United States Geological Survey as " comparably mild " . Flooding along the Brandywine Creek was at least the fifth highest in 45 years . Flooding was worst in the northernmost portion of the state .

Flooding began in many streams in eastern Pennsylvania on August 18 . The Delaware River crested at over 40 ft (12 m) in Easton , which was 4 ft (1 @. @ 2 m) above the previous record set in 1903 . In Allentown , the Lehigh River crested at 23 @. @ 4 ft (7 @. @ 1 m) , surpassing the previous record of 21 @. @ 7 ft (6 @. @ 6 m) set in 1942 . The floods were the worst in record across eastern portions of the state , notably in the Poconos and along all tributaries of the Delaware River from Honesdale to Philadelphia . Lake Wallenpaupack and other reservoirs mitigated flooding . Floods destroyed 17 bridges and 55 mi (89 km) of track along the Delaware , Lackawanna and Western Railroad , which is the primary rail line in northeastern Pennsylvania . Damage to the line totaled several million dollars , and overall railroad damage in the state totaled \$ 16 million . Hundreds of cars were damaged in the region . Damage extended into Philadelphia due to flooding along the Schuylkill River , but the damage was minor . In the small village of Upper Black Eddy , hundreds of people became homeless , and the post office was washed away . Statewide , the floods destroyed or breached 30 dams , and destroyed about 150 road of rail bridges . Flooding left home and factory damage in the Allentown area . In the Poconos in Pennsylvania , the Brodhead Creek nearly destroyed a camp , killing 37 people , mostly children . Many people at the camp fled to a lodge that was ultimately destroyed . The Brodhead Creek also washed out a bridge along U.S. Route 209 between Stroudsburg and East Stroudsburg , flooding both cities . There were about 75 deaths in the area , and another 10 deaths occurred in Greentown due to flooding along the Lackawaxen River . Overall , there were 101 deaths in the state , and damage totaled at least \$ 70 million .

In New Jersey , flooding largely occurred north of Trenton and west of Perth Amboy ; rainfall in the southern two ? thirds of the state was less than 3 in (76 mm) . The three major rivers in the area - the Delaware , Passaic , and Raritan - had severe flooding , and damage was widespread . When the Millstone River flooded , two teenagers drowned while canoeing , and a police officer drowned while attempting to rescue them . About 200 families were evacuated in Oakland along the Ramapo River . Damage in the state was heaviest along the Delaware from Port Jervis , New York to Trenton , where flooding inundated adjacent towns . Between the two towns , all but two bridges were damaged , including four that were destroyed . About 500 children had to be rescued from camps on three islands in the Delaware River ; they were airlifted to a high school in Frenchtown . In that city , about 200 people were forced to evacuate their houses along the water . In Trenton , workers used sandbags to prevent flooding from affecting government buildings . Flooding destroyed the Portland ? Columbia Pedestrian Bridge , first constructed in 1831 , after most of it was submerged . The center of the Northampton Street Bridge between Easton , Pennsylvania and Phillipsburg , New Jersey collapsed . A dam near Branchville collapsed , flooding the town and causing heavy damage . About 200 homes were damaged or destroyed in Lambertville . Statewide , 93 homes were destroyed . Damage was estimated at \$ 27 @. @ 5 million .

Flash floods occurred in mountainous regions of southeastern New York , including Port Jervis along the Delaware River . Wappinger Creek flooded to cause heavy damage . Most streams in the

Rondout Creek basin left damage due to fast @-@ moving waters , including heavy damage near Ellenville . Damage in New York was largely limited to an area between Port Jervis and Poughkeepsie . Several bridges were destroyed along the Bash Bish Brook , and portions of U.S. Route 209 were flooded . Damage totaled \$ 16 @.@ 2 million , and there was one death in the state .

= = = New England = = =

Diane produced heavy rainfall after recurving inland , setting rainfall records in several areas . Windsor Locks , Connecticut reported 12 @.@ 05 in (306 mm) in a 23 ? hour period ; the station 's total , located near Hartford , was 5 @.@ 32 in (135 mm) higher than the 24 ? hour rainfall record in Hartford . Some locations along the Housatonic River experienced 0 @.@ 75 in (19 mm) per hour over 24 hours . The highest total in the state was 16 @.@ 86 in (428 mm) at a station near Torrington . This is the highest rainfall on record in the state . The highest rainfall in the United States related to the storm was 19 @.@ 75 in (502 mm) in Westfield , Massachusetts , which was also the wettest known storm in the state 's history as well as throughout New England . Other statewide rainfall maxima in New England included 8 @.@ 45 in (215 mm) in Greenville , Rhode Island , 4 @.@ 34 in (110 mm) in Essex Junction , Vermont , 3 @.@ 31 in (84 mm) in Fitzwilliam , New Hampshire , and 0 @.@ 62 in (16 mm) at Long Falls Dam in Maine . Throughout New England , 206 dams were damaged or destroyed , mostly in the region south of Worcester , Massachusetts . About 7 @,@ 000 people were injured throughout New England , most of whom in Connecticut .

Damage was greatest in Connecticut , where floods affected about two @-@ thirds of the state . It was the largest flood on record in the state 's history . All major streams and valleys were flooded during the storm , including hundreds of tributaries , and 30 gauges in the state reported the highest level on record . The Connecticut River at Hartford reached the third @-@ highest level on record at the time , cresting at 30 @.@ 6 ft (9 @.@ 3 m) , or 14 @.@ 6 ft (4 @.@ 5 m) above flood stage . Although there was rural damage , the city of Hartford was spared from flooding due to previously constructed dykes . The Naugatuck River had significant flooding that damaged or destroyed every bridge across it and did extensive damage in Ansonia . In Waterbury , the river washed buildings and railroad girders into a bridge . In the city , 30 people were killed , including 26 in 13 houses that were washed away in one block . The Quinebaug River flooded the city of Putnam at the same time that a major fire originated at a magnesium plant . Much of the commercial district of Winsted was destroyed by the Mad River , which reached 10 ft (3 @.@ 0 m) deep ; the floods destroyed most buildings on the south side of the town 's Main Street , and carried away several cars from a car dealership . The local newspaper reported that 95 % of businesses were destroyed or severely damaged in Winsted . High rivers destroyed historical sites and buildings , and statewide Diane destroyed 563 houses . There were 77 deaths in the state and \$ 350 million in damage . Most of the damage in the state was industrial or commercial damage .

In Rhode Island , flooding was worst in the northern portion of the state , mostly along the Blackstone River , which expanded to a width of about 1 mi (1 @.@ 6 km) . The Horseshoe Dam was washed out , causing heavy damage in Woonsocket . There , about 6 @,@ 000 of its 50 @,@ 000 residents were left unemployed . Record high tides were also reported . In Rhode Island , damage was estimated at \$ 21 million , mostly in Woonsocket , and there were three deaths .

Much of southern Massachusetts , from its border with New York toward Worcester and to the ocean , experienced flooding . Most streams in western Massachusetts overflowed their banks , and in southeastern Massachusetts , which is largely flat terrain , streams flooded large areas along their channels ; these streams moved slowly , while other areas in New England sustained damage due to the fast @-@ moving nature of the floods . Record flooding was reported along 24 stream gauges in the state , including ones that surpassed the peak set by the 1938 New England hurricane . Both the Charles and Neponset rivers were among those that flooded . About 40 % of the city of Worcester was flooded during Diane , and in Russell , the state police forced many residents to evacuate . In Weymouth , the floods were considered at least a 1 in 50 year event . The Little River

in Buffumville , Massachusetts had a peak discharge of $8 \times 10^3 \text{ ft}^3/\text{s}$ ($236 \text{ m}^3/\text{s}$) , which was 6×10^2 times greater than the previous peak and 28×10^2 times the average annual flooding . Flooded rivers breached run @-@ of @-@ the @-@ river dams and covered nearby roadways , although dams with reservoirs resulted in less flooding . Nearly all dams along the French River were severely damaged or destroyed . One failed dam in West Auburn washed out a portion of U.S. Route 20 , and the same route was washed out near Charlton . An overflown brook also damaged the Massachusetts Turnpike . A train on the Boston and Albany Railroad line plunged into a washed out portion along the Westfield River . Along the same river , floods destroyed roads and tobacco farms . In the state , 97 houses were destroyed . Damage in Massachusetts was second worst of the affected states , totaling \$ 110 million ; the damage was largely due to flooded basements . There were 12 deaths in the state .

= = Aftermath = =

In Diane 's immediate aftermath , one of the first priorities in response was to distribute adequate inoculations for typhoid amongst the widespread areas left without clean drinking water . The United States Army assisted in search and rescue operations using helicopters . After the floods of Hurricane Diane , more than 100×10^3 people fled to shelter or away from their houses . The American Red Cross quickly provided aid to the affected residents , using churches and public buildings to house homeless people . In the two weeks after the storm , Americans donated about \$ 10 million to the Red Cross . The countries of Great Britain , Netherlands , Australia , Canada , France , Austria , and Venezuela offered aid to help the flood victims , sending emergency supplies . Additional flooding affected New England in September and October 1955 , although neither was as major as those caused by Hurricane Diane . Following Diane , hundreds of companies affected by the flooding installed waterproof doors and windows to preempt similar disasters in the future .

President Dwight Eisenhower declared eight states as disaster areas , making them eligible for federal aid . The Small Business Administration opened 18 temporary offices in the eastern United States for people to take out disaster loan applications . In the months after the storm , both the United States federal government and the American Red Cross had difficulty raising enough funds for the storm victims ; collectively , the Red Cross , the Small Business Administration , and Farmers Home Administration raised \$ 37 million , which was less than 8 % of Diane 's damage total . Throughout 1955 , the Red Cross assisted about 10×10^3 families in New England and the Mid @-@ Atlantic states ; some of the families received aid to move to a new house not in a flood zone . The Small Business Administration provided about 1×10^3 loans , totaling \$ 25 million , for small businesses . Senator Herbert H. Lehman proposed a \$ 12 billion federal flood insurance program . In 1956 , the United States Congress passed the Federal Flood Insurance Act , but the program was not enacted due to lack of funding . A nationwide flood program was not enacted until the passage of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 . After the floods from Diane , the American federal government provided funding for the Army Corps of Engineers to construct dams and reservoirs throughout New England to mitigate future flooding . In about 14 years , the Corps built 29 dams in Connecticut alone at the cost of \$ 70 million , including three along the Connecticut River . The federal government restored plans from the 1930s to build dams along the Delaware River , one of which along Tocks Island . A controversy arose there due to the 40 mi (64 km) long reservoir the dam would have created , causing 600 families to be displaced . The project was canceled in 1975 , and the acquired lands became the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area .

In Pennsylvania , washed @-@ out rail lines prevented operation along the Delaware , Lackawanna and Western Railroad for several weeks , and lines reopened after about two months . The expense of reopening , and the loss of being closed , led to the railroad merging with the Erie Railroad to become the Erie Lackawanna Railway in 1960 . One stranded train along the line prompted a helicopter to rescue 235 people . Flooding along the Lehigh River destroyed 15 industrial plants , which left more than 15×10^3 people near Allentown , Pennsylvania without work temporarily . The mayor of Scranton declared a state of emergency due to the floods , ordering all businesses to close . United States Army soldiers provided water to residents after the town lost its water supply .

Elsewhere , the Pennsylvania National Guard was on duty on streets in damaged towns , including 50 to prevent looting in Upper Black Eddy , which was one of the hardest hit towns . Helicopters assisted in discovering bodies at Camp David , where many deaths occurred during the storm . Statewide , thousands of people were left homeless . In Stroudsburg , there was a food shortage , and officials enacted a curfew , after reports of looting . In the same city , water was shipped in milk cartons to the flood victims , which later inspired a Federal Civil Defense Administration proposal to use water packaged in milk containers in the event of a nuclear attack . The state government implemented a tax on cigarettes to help pay for storm damage , which lasted for about two years ; this was partially due to a lack of significant funding from the federal government . Pennsylvania also enacted an increase in the gasoline tax that was later made permanent to pay for the Interstate Highway System . The two taxes , each an increase of 1 penny , totaled \$ 71 million , a part of which was set aside for future disasters . The experience of the storm 's aftermath provided the basis for the aftermath for Hurricane Agnes in 1972 . In New Jersey , Governor Robert B. Meyner declared the floods as the state 's worst natural disaster .

After the Naugatuck River flood in Connecticut cut off communications and bridges , the state was effectively cut in two . The state 's National Guard used helicopters to rescue people . Governor Abraham A. Ribicoff visited areas affected by the flooding , due to the damage , Connecticut was declared a federal disaster area on August 20 . The declaration allocated \$ 25 million in assistance to the state . Governor Ribicoff requested \$ 34 million in funds to rebuild and produce future flood mitigation projects ; the state 's funding was paid by a combination of bonds and tax increases . Including subsequent storms , the 1955 floods cumulatively killed 91 people and left 1 @, @ 100 families homeless . Flooding occurred in 67 towns , resulting in damage to 20 @, @ 000 families . About 86 @, @ 000 people were left unemployed after the floods . In Winsted , the buildings that were washed away along the south side of Main Street were never rebuilt .

Massachusetts Governor Christian Herter also issued a state of emergency , due to the widespread flooding damage . As a result , the state 's National Guard and the Army Corps assisted in cleanup , and most roads took three weeks to clear . Residents in areas affected by Diane 's flooding were advised to boil water and not to use gas cooking equipment . Diane 's historic rainfall resulted in the wettest month on record in Boston with a total of 17 in (430 mm) , a record that stands as of 2010 ; Boston 's 24 ? hour total of 8 @. @ 4 in (210 mm) remained the highest daily total as of 1996 . Following Diane 's floods , cities in Massachusetts enlarged culverts and improved draining systems , as well as constructing weirs ; these systems helped mitigate against future flooding .

The name Diane was retired from the Atlantic hurricane naming list . Due to the damage from hurricanes in 1954 and 1955 , including Diane , public outcry over storm damage led to the creation of the National Hurricane Center in 1956 . Using a monetary deflator in 2010 United States dollars , the damage from Diane would be about \$ 7 @. @ 4 billion , which would have been the 17th highest in the United States . Accounting for inflation , changes in personal wealth , and population changes , it is estimated Diane would have caused \$ 18 billion in damage in 2010 , or the 15th highest for a United States hurricane .