

= 1945 Texas hurricane =

The 1945 Texas hurricane was a slow @-@ moving tropical cyclone which paralleled the Texas Gulf Coast , causing extensive damage in late @-@ August 1945 . The fifth tropical storm and second hurricane of the annual hurricane season , the storm formed out of an area of disturbed weather which had been situated over the Bay of Campeche on August 24 . In favorable conditions , the system quickly intensified as it steadily moved northward , attaining hurricane intensity later that day . As it approached the coast , however , the hurricane quickly slowed in forward motion , allowing it time to intensify off the Texas coast . After reaching major hurricane status , the storm reached peak intensity on August 26 as a minimal Category 3 hurricane with maximum sustained winds of 115 miles per hour (185 km / h) . Later that day , the cyclone executed a slight curve toward the Texas coast , and early the next day made landfall near Seadrift at peak intensity . Once inland , it quickly weakened , and degenerated into a remnant low on August 29 over Central Texas .

The hurricane 's slow movement and strong intensity was a catalyst for extensive and damaging impacts in Texas . Prior to making landfall , thousands of people were ordered to evacuate from cities along coastal regions . Upon making landfall , the storm brought strong winds , which caused widespread power outages and infrastructural damage . A peak gust of 135 mph (215 km / h) measured in Collegeport , Texas . Northeast of Houston , Texas , a tornado killed a person after traveling for 22 mi (35 km) . At the coast , the hurricane produced strong storm surge which swept and damaged port cities . Port Lavaca , Texas was inundated by a 15 ft (4 @.@ 6 m) storm surge , which at the time was the third highest ever recorded in the state . Damage in the port alone was estimated to be as high as \$ 1 million . The strong wave action killed two people when it capsized a fishing vessel . Further inland , the storm produced torrential rainfall , which was also aided by the hurricane 's slow movement . Rainfall peaked at 19 @.@ 6 in (500 mm) in Hockley , Texas . The heavy rains caused extensive crop damage , particularly to cotton and rice crops . Damage to cotton in the Corpus Christi , Texas area alone was estimated at \$ 1 @.@ 5 million . Overall , the hurricane caused \$ 20 @.@ 1 million in damage , mostly to crops , and three deaths .

= = Meteorological history = =

Towards the end of August 1945 , an area of squally weather persisted in the Bay of Campeche , near the Gulf Coast of Mexico . After a prolonged period of marginal development , the cluster of thunderstorms began to quickly organize beginning on August 24 . According to HURDAT ? the official database listing positions and intensities of Atlantic tropical cyclones dating back to 1851 ? the disturbance became sufficiently organized to be classified as a tropical storm by 0000 UTC on August 24 . At the time , the storm already maintained maximum sustained winds of 45 mph (72 km / h) . Initially , the tropical storm moved generally northward at approximately 18 mph (29 km / h) , but gradually slowed as it neared the United States Gulf Coast . Quickly developing past tropical cyclogenesis , the system reached the equivalent of a modern @-@ day Category 1 hurricane at 0600 UTC on August 25 . Its forward motion continued to slow until it moved nearly stationary at roughly 5 mph (8 km / h) , which allowed the system to remain a tropical cyclone for an extended period of time , despite its proximity to the coast . The hurricane 's intensity continued to quickly increase , and by 1200 UTC on August 26 , the storm had attained major hurricane status , the equivalent of a modern @-@ day Category 3 hurricane .

The hurricane executed a slight curve to the northeast later that day , causing it to move inland over the Texas coast . Initially , the major hurricane was analyzed to have made landfall early on August 27 over Port Aransas with winds of 140 mph (225 km / h) , equivalent to a modern @-@ day Category 4 hurricane . However , an reanalysis was conducted on the system , and concluded that it had only attained Category 3 intensity before making landfall at 1200 UTC that day . The reanalysis moved the landfall point closer to Seadrift as well . At the time , the storm had maximum sustained winds confined within an area about 10 miles (16 km) from the hurricane 's center . The reanalysis also concluded that the storm contained a minimum central pressure of 963 millibars (28 @.@ 44

inHg) at landfall . Once inland , the hurricane slowly weakened , but maintained hurricane intensity until 1200 UTC on August 28 . After further weakening to a tropical depression by 0000 UTC the next day , the disturbance dissipated over the Texas interior at 1800 UTC on August 29 .

= = Preparations and impact = =

Upon classification as a hurricane by the former United States Weather Bureau (USWB) on August 25 , a hurricane warning was issued for coastal areas between Corpus Christi and Brownsville , Texas , and between Galveston , Texas and Lake Charles , Louisiana . At the time , the storm was forecast to make landfall between Port O 'Connor and Freeport , Texas . However , all small craft offshore from the mouth of the Rio Grande and Burrwood , Louisiana were warned to remain in port or return to the coast . All other shipping in the western Gulf of Mexico were advised to exercise extreme caution . Despite having just formed , forecasters already suggested that it would be potentially the most destructive storm of the hurricane season thus far . As a result of the storm 's intensity and repeated warnings , thousands evacuated potentially affected coastal regions . In Freeport , Texas , 20 @, @ 000 people evacuated . Mustang Island was fully evacuated prior to the storm impacting land . Throughout the hurricane 's early developmental stages , reconnaissance flights were periodically made into the storm to gather data .

Though situated on the opposite side of the Gulf of Mexico as Florida , tropical moisture extending from the hurricane caused torrential rainfall in the state . In St. Petersburg , the heavy rains set a 30 @-@ year record and flooded low @-@ lying areas . Inundated streets blocked traffic and delayed transit bus routes . In Booker and Salt Creeks , the floodwaters backed up sewage systems . Though there were no deaths as a result of the floods , two people were rescued by police after their house was surrounded by water . Telecommunications in the Tampa Bay Area were delayed for up to two hours due to damage sustained to communication lines as a result of the rains . Despite its nearby proximity , effects in Tampa , Florida were much less severe , with only small showers and gusts never exceeding 25 mph (40 km / h) .

Upon making landfall on the Texas coast late on August 27 , the hurricane caused a wide swath of destruction , and was considered one of the worst hurricanes to impact the state in at least 25 years . A 400 mi (645 km) wide swath of land experienced moderate to severe impacts during the storm . Strong winds were reported in various locations , with a peak gust of 135 mph (215 km / h) measured in Collegeport , Texas . At a weather station in Naval Air Station Corpus Christi , a wind gust of 101 mph (163 km / h) was measured . Across Corpus Christi , the strong winds knocked down communication and power lines , causing widespread power outages . Thus , all local radio stations were off air for a period of time . However , power was quickly restored within an hour after cutoff . Winds within the city peaked at 75 mph (120 km / h) . Damage in the city was estimated to be below \$ 100 @, @ 000 . Further south in Port Isabel , Texas , winds peaked at 76 mph (122 km / h) . However , in nearby Brownsville , Texas , damage associated with the hurricane . In El Campo , Texas , strong winds blew the roof off of a local hospital . Thus , 30 patients were evacuated to hospitals in Wharton , Texas . Power in Wharton was temporarily knocked out for a short time . As the storm progressed further inland , additional damage was reported . In Bay City , Texas , gusts uprooted trees and scattered debris over the city streets . Heavy rains there inundated roads under as much as 2 ft (0 @. @ 6 m) of water . As a result , only one highway remained open . In Rockport , Texas , additional homes were unroofed , with damages estimated at \$ 500 @, @ 000 . Offshore , the hurricane produced strong waves which caused coastal impacts . In Port Aransas , Texas , waves inundated roads to a depth of 4 ft (1 @. @ 2 m) . The strong waves later separated the port from the mainland , and destroyed or damage all buildings and structures there , causing an estimated \$ 750 @, @ 000 in damage there . Power in Port Aransas was disrupted during the night of August 27 . At Aransas Pass , surf was as high as automotive running boards . At Port Lavaca , Texas , the tide rose up to 15 ft (4 @. @ 6 m) above normal , inundating the coastal city and forcing the coastline to retreat 50 ft (15 m) from its initial position . At the time , the measured storm surge was only the third highest recorded in Texas history , behind peak measurements taken during the 1900 Galveston hurricane and 1919 Florida Keys hurricane . Damage estimates for Port Lavaca

ranged from \$ 750 @, @ 000 ? \$ 1 million . Offshore of Port Isabel , the strong waves capsized a fishing vessel , killing all two of its crew members .

The hurricane 's slow movement parallel to the Texas coast resulted in torrential rainfall , peaking at 19 @. @ 6 in (500 mm) near Hockley over a period of a little over three days . The excessive precipitation helped increase monthly rainfall amounts in the region to three times above average . Cotton and rice crops were badly damaged during the storm . The American Crop Growers Association estimated that up to 20 % of the rice crop was lost during the storm . Damage to unpicked cotton in the Corpus Christi area alone totaled to \$ 1 @, @ 500 @, @ 000 . In Houston , the heavy rains halted traffic and increased flood risk to property near the city 's bayous . Precipitation in the city peaked at 15 @. @ 65 in (398 mm) in a 24 @- @ hour period . However , the Barker Dam prevented a large scale flooding event in the city . A gust of 55 mph (90 km / h) collapsed a suburban residence , killing the occupant inside . Approximately 8 mi (13 km) north @- @ northeast of Houston , a small tornado formed and traversed for 22 mi (35 km) across the northern suburbs of the city , killing a person and causing 15 injuries . The tornado also had a path width of 75 yd (70 m) , and damage to property was estimated at \$ 35 @, @ 000 . Heavy rainfall from the storm was reported as far west as San Antonio , Texas . Overall , the hurricane caused \$ 20 @. @ 1 million in damages , with \$ 14 million attributable to agricultural losses , \$ 5 @. @ 883 million to infrastructural damage , and \$ 250 @, @ 000 to cattle and poultry losses . Despite the large swath of devastation , only three people were killed due to the extensive precautionary measures taken before the storm .

After the hurricane passed , the American Red Cross and other relief agencies began to survey damage and assist in repair and rehabilitation activities . Red Cross personnel in the central coastal area assisted 15 @, @ 000 refugees with food and care necessities . Robert Edison , then @- @ director of the Midwest sector of the agency , requested 5 @, @ 000 @, @ 000 ft (1 @, @ 500 @, @ 000 m) of lumber and 52 tons (47 tonnes) of steel . The Salvation Army , stationed in Houston , issued an appeal for clothing materials . State health department and agency crews were dispatched to check water and other sanitation facilities .