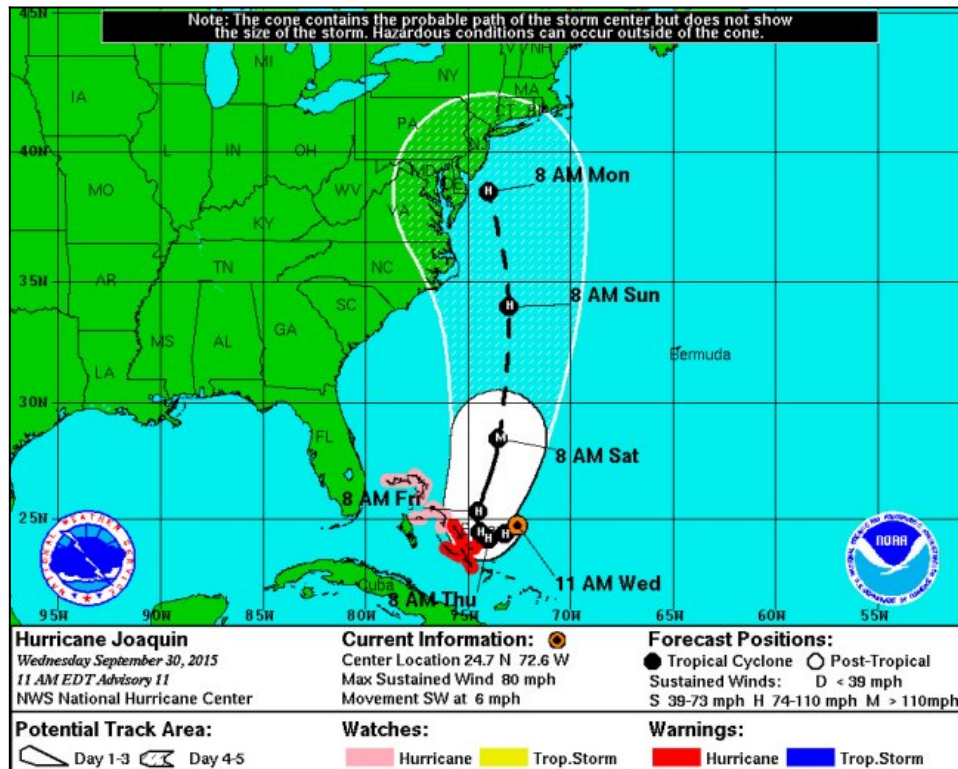


Mayor Mitchell Encourages Residents & Business Owners to Take Preparedness Steps as Hurricane Season Peaks



Know the Risk, Be Prepared, Stay Informed

As the just-upgraded Hurricane Joaquin churns over the central Atlantic, Mayor Jon Mitchell reminds New Bedford residents and business owners that taking basic preparedness steps well before a storm approaches is the key to protecting lives and property. There is still much uncertainty in Hurricane Joaquin's path and no advisories related to it have been issued for New Bedford but City officials are closely monitoring the National Hurricane Center and local National Weather Service for the latest updates. (See attached image of NOAA's most recent projected storm path.)

"This has been the quiet Hurricane Season that NOAA predicted

but we are not out of the woods yet. The rain we are experiencing now and the upgrade of Joaquin from Tropical Storm to a Hurricane should serve as reminders as to how important it is to be prepared for severe weather,” said Mark Mahoney, Emergency Management Director

Though Atlantic Hurricane Season officially began on June 1st and continues through November 30th, 75% of the 40 tropical storm systems that have impacted this region over the last 100 years have occurred during the months of August and September. Recent storms such as Tropical Storm Irene in 2011 and Hurricane Sandy in 2012, as well as past hurricanes such as Hurricane Bob in 1991 are reminders that Massachusetts residents and visitors must prepare for the next hurricane. September is National Emergency Preparedness Month.

“I encourage every resident and business owner in New Bedford to take the potential for severe weather seriously. Preparation is the best way to reduce the likelihood of injury or property damage in the event of a hurricane or tropical storm—know the risks, take steps to prepare, and stay informed,” said Mayor Jon Mitchell.

The following information on emergency preparedness is provided by the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency and the City of New Bedford Emergency Management Department:

1. Know Your Risk

Understand the hazards that are associated with hurricanes, and what risks they bring. The biggest hazards associated with tropical storms and hurricanes include storm surge and storm tide, heavy rainfall and inland flooding, as well as high winds. These hazards can cause property damage, widespread loss of power, and catastrophic flooding both inland and along the coast.

In New Bedford, it may be necessary to evacuate parts of the city to protect residents from storm surge flooding. In all

but the most severe storms, the area of evacuation will be those low-lying areas outside the New Bedford Hurricane Barrier. Evacuation is also an option for residents living outside potential flood areas who feel more comfortable “riding out” the storm in the safety and security of a mass care hurricane shelter. Residents and businesses are urged to heed evacuation orders from city officials when issued.

2. Be Prepared

There are important steps everyone should take to prepare themselves and their family for the next hurricane or tropical storm. Being prepared reduces the risk of property damage, injury or death.

- Be prepared to Evacuate or Shelter in Place;
- Ensure your family is prepared by building an Emergency Kit with important disaster supplies and developing a Communication Plan;
- Prepare your home and property for a hurricane.

3. Stay Informed

Stay informed throughout Hurricane Season: know how to receive warnings and alerts, and critical information before and during a storm.

- The Emergency Alert System (EAS) via radio and television.
- Local “Reverse 9-1-1” type notification systems. These systems may require opt-in/registration in advance, so check with your local public safety officials about which systems are used in your community and how to register.
- Wireless Emergency Alerts.
- MEMA’s free Massachusetts Alerts app that delivers critical information to your smartphone. To receive emergency information on your smartphone, including severe weather alerts from the National Weather Service

and emergency information from MEMA, download the Massachusetts Alerts free app. To learn more about Massachusetts Alerts, and for information on how to download the free app (called Ping4Alerts!) onto your smartphone, visit: www.mass.gov/mema/mobileapp.

- All Hazards National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Radio.
- U.S. Coast Guard Marine Broadcast
- Traditional media.
- MEMA's Twitter or Facebook accounts or social media accounts of a public safety agency in your community.
- A message on Teletypewriters (TTY).

Other sources of important information:

- National Hurricane Center – <http://www.nhc.noaa.gov>
- National Weather Service (Taunton) – <http://www.weather.gov/box/>
- Federal Emergency Management Agency – <http://www.ready.gov/hurricanes>

For additional information about Hurricane Preparedness, please visit the City of New Bedford Emergency Management page:

<http://www.newbedford-ma.gov/emergency-management/hurricane/>
