



NORTHAMPTON COUNTY

Department of EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES



STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

TOPIC: Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Scale	SOG #: 2.21.1
Status: ACTIVE	Written: 11/01/2008
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PURPOSE

The Saffir-Simpson scale is a widely recognized and accepted practical tool that planners rely on to estimate the destructive forces associated with hurricanes. This scale classifies hurricanes into five categories based on wind speed and describes the destructive forces caused by wind, storm surge and wave action for each category. Hurricanes reaching category 3 or higher are considered major hurricanes because of their potential for loss of life and damage. Category 1 and 2 storms are still very dangerous and warrant preventative measures.

SCOPE

All Northampton County Department of EMS (NCEMS) personnel

CONTENT

Category 1

Sustained Winds (MPH) 74-95

Minimal: Damage primarily to shrubbery, trees, foliage and unanchored mobile homes. No real damage to other structures. Storm surge 4–5 feet. Coastal roads flooded

Category 2

Sustained Winds (MPH) 96-110

Moderate: Some trees blown down. Major damage to exposed mobile homes. Some damage to roofing materials, windows and doors. Storm surge 6–8 feet, with up to 12-foot waves.

Category 3

Sustained Winds (MPH) 111-130

Extensive: Large trees blown down. Mobile homes destroyed. Some structural damage to roofing materials of buildings. Some structural damage to small buildings. Storm surge 9–12 feet, with waves up to 18 feet. Flooding can occur up to 10 miles inland.

Category 4

Sustained Winds (MPH) 131-155

Extreme: Trees blown down. Complete destruction of mobile homes. Extensive damage to roofing materials, windows and doors. Complete failure of roofs on many small residences. Storm surge 13–18 feet, with waves up to 25 feet. Flooding to 10 feet above sea level up to 30 miles inland.

Category 5

Sustained Winds (MPH) >155

Catastrophic: Complete roof failures on many residences and industrial buildings. Extensive damage to windows and doors. Some complete building failures. Storm surge over 18 feet. Flooding to 10 feet or more above sea level up to 30 miles inland.