

## **EOC SITUATION REPORT #2 Hurricane Irene**

### **Summary**

After sweeping across the Caribbean affecting Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Turks and Caicos and the Bahamas, Irene crossed the US as a category 1 hurricane.

Irene continues moving into eastern Canada now with tropical storm force winds.



Source: NOAA

### **The Bahamas**

Irene was Category 3 as it passed the Bahamas by Friday, affecting all islands to various degrees. To date, no injuries or deaths have been reported, and estimated 362,400 persons live in affected islands. Due to massive infrastructure damage in some islands, displaced population is hosted by relatives and members of the community. 400 people are in shelters. Migration population in some of the most affected islands including Abaco and Eleuthra is of concern because they have not yet made contact with health personnel.

The National Emergency National Agency (NEMA) reported extensive damage to houses, floods, and interruption in electricity. Communication continues to be limited. NEMA dissolved their Emergency Operations Center (EOC) at 8:00 a.m. on Saturday 27, 2011. The Ministry of Health EOC is still functional until contact is made with all health personnel in the affected islands.

### **Health Impacts**

Population with special needs have been identified by health personnel in the islands, including pregnant women, elderly, and people living with HIV/AIDS. The Ministry of Health has contacted health personnel in 21 out of 35 health facilities in the islands. All clinics and hospitals are functional and open to the public. Overall, there is no major infrastructural damage, although loss of medication or supplies has been reported in the health facilities.

## **Immediate Concerns**

Potential disruption of services in most affected islands due to structural and infrastructural damage to clinics including roof damage, displaced shingles, damaged windows and doors, and floods. A total of 15 clinics out of 69 have reported partial or total damage. There is no information on 10 clinics. Generators are not functioning in 5 clinics. In addition, dengue control activities need to be reestablished in New Providence as soon as possible due to the preexisting cases of Dengue.

## **Turks and Caicos**

To date, no deaths have been reported. There was one report of head injury during the storm. There was significant flooding on all islands but to a greater extent on the island of Providenciales, which resulted in impassable roads and water damage to the interior of buildings and goods. However, despite the flooding of homes especially in vulnerable communities, many persons abandoned the shelters and returned to their flooding homes, many of which are unsuitable for habitation.

## **Health Impacts**

There was no structural damage to any of the health facilities; however, there was minor flooding in a few of the clinics on the family islands due to rain beating through windows and doors. There were in general minimal structural damages to buildings country wide and a few fallen trees and power lines.

## **Immediate Concerns**

Significant flooding with increased risk of vector borne diseases such as dengue and leptospirosis due to dengue fever outbreak in Bahamas and imported cases in the TCI and poor solid waste system and increased inappropriate disposal of spoiled food and fecal waste post storm

Flooding also increases risk of water and food borne diseases such as cholera, shigellosis, etc. There is also a significant number of vulnerable communities (poor housing infrastructure, no toilet facilities, no running water and crowded living conditions.

Capacity to conduct communicable and infectious disease surveillance and disease outbreak management is reduced due to a lack of human resources. A lack of capacity of providing psychological support has also been identified.

Capacity to control mosquitoes is also small due to the lack of mosquito fogging equipment on the island of Providenciales and some of the other islands.

## **United States**

10 states have received federal emergency declarations. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) announced that federal aid has been made available

to the District of Columbia to supplement district response efforts in the area. In New York, more than 2 million people were evacuated from high risk areas, including 7,000 patients from hospitals and health centers.

The U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services remains at the ready to provide public health and medical support to states along the east coast impacted by Hurricane Irene. To date these states have not requested public health emergency declarations or public health or medical support

## **Activities**

### **The Bahamas**

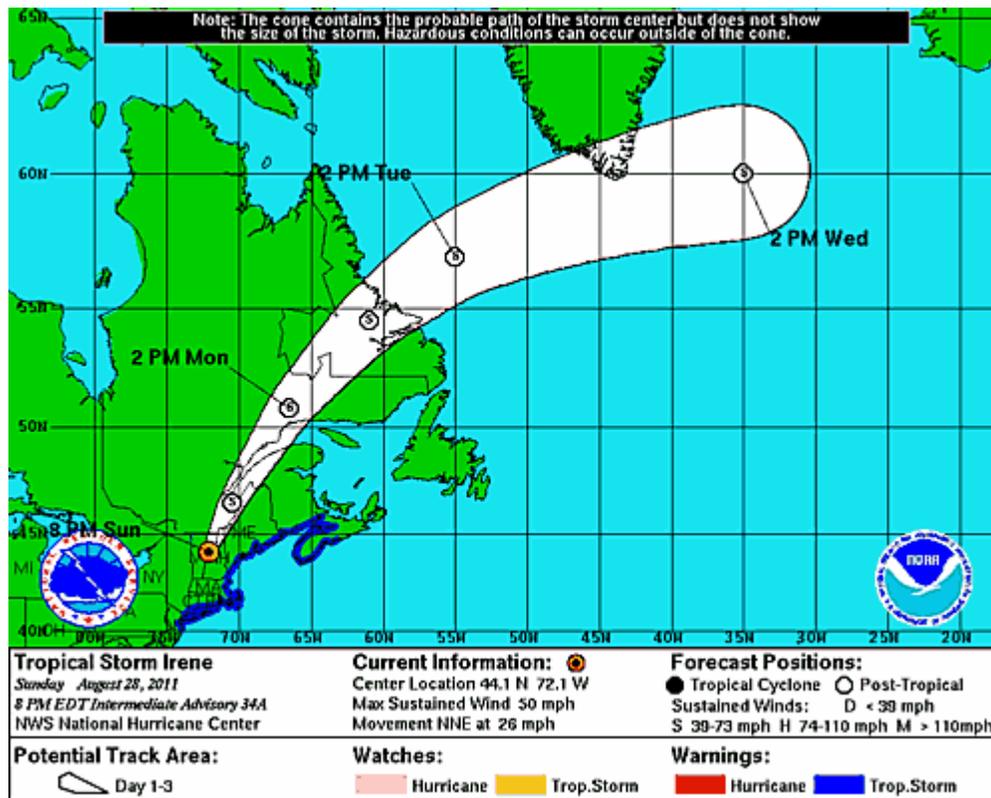
Emergency Operations Center is operational, and will be dissolved as soon as contact is made with all clinics. The Ministry of Health is currently conducting rapid needs assessments in coordination with NEMA. The Ministry of Health continues to be in close contact with the Environmental Health Department to address potential water and sanitation issues. Contact has been made with the majority of the health providers. Initial damage assessment teams have been established to join NEMA in all islands.

PAHO is participating in the Rapid Needs Assessment coordinated by NEMA in the Bahamas and continues to support the Ministry of Health with support staff in the EOC and with the Rapid Assessment Team. A field team has been deployed to the Bahamas to support the efforts in disaster management, water and sanitation, health infrastructure damage assessment, and information management.

### **Turk and Caicos**

The Ministry of Health is conducting assessments to further evaluate the damages caused by the impact of Irene and determine the needs with the support of PAHO. It is foreseen that human resources would be needed to be able to conduct communicable and infectious disease surveillance and disease outbreak management.

## Three-Day Forecast



## Resources

- NOAA / [National Weather Service](#).
- [Pan American Health Organization](#)'s main website.
- [World Health Organization](#)'s main website.

The PAHO/WHO Emergency Operations Center Situation Report will issue situation reports as the situation requires.

Contact the PAHO EOC at +1 202 974 3399 or [eoc@paho.org](mailto:eoc@paho.org)  
[Click here](#) to view previous situation reports from the PAHO Emergency Operations Center.