

2020 Pacific Hurricane Season Approaching

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The 2020 Pacific hurricane season is an ongoing event in the annual cycle of tropical cyclone formation, in which tropical cyclones form in the Eastern Pacific Ocean. This season featured the earliest start to the season east of 140°W on record, surpassing Tropical Storm Adrian in 2017. The season will officially begin on May 15 in the East Pacific Ocean, and on June 1 in the Central Pacific; they will both end on November 30. However, the formation of tropical cyclones is possible at any time of the year, as shown by the formation of Tropical Depression One-E on April 25. The formation of One-E resulted in the earliest start to a season in the Eastern Pacific since reliable records began in 1966.

The Central Pacific Hurricane Center, which is located on the campus of UH Manoa, is responsible for the area between 140 degrees west and the International Date Line. The National Hurricane Center in Florida is responsible for tracking storms in the Eastern Pacific and will hand over responsibility for tracking at the 140°W mark.

An active hurricane season will strain emergency response amid the COVID-19 pandemic, forecasters warn. A landfalling hurricane could very well amplify the spread of the virus, and spread with increased transmission of COVID-19 in congregate settings such as shelters, with disrupted infrastructure, such as loss of power, and water. We all need to prepare now, and expect less; that is the unfortunate reality we are in. We cannot wait for government to initially help us. First responders will do their best to help everyone in need if a hurricane hits, but there will be a lack of extensive preparation that could hurt us. You can't summon new capabilities and capacities in a moment of panic. They take years and require significant commitments from politicians, legislators and the private sector to build lasting resilience. Be prepared by having your "GO" bags ready as well as your emergency disaster kit in the event you have to evacuate.

REMEMBER, with our economy opening up, we still need to adhere to the stay at home policy as much as possible. It is not back to normal yet. Please do not let up your guard. Wear a face mask as you practice social distancing in public.

There are people out in public who are not practicing social distancing and will make it hard for all of us when the second wave arrives. It's not **if**, it's **when**, it arrives.