

Hurricane Season Blows In



Will 2005 be one of the busiest years for hurricanes? It's starting off that way. So far, five storms have turned into hurricanes.

The time between June 1 and November 30 is considered hurricane season in the Atlantic Ocean north of the equator. During this period storms that move off the coast of Africa meet warm ocean water to form violent Atlantic storms. To be called a hurricane, a storm must have winds higher than 74 miles per hour.

In July, Hurricane Dennis, landed on the northwest coast of Florida. Its winds packed a 120-mile-per-hour punch. Dennis flooded large areas and left hundreds of thousands of people without power. The hurricane, which hit Florida on July 10, was the fourth storm of the year. In an average year, the fourth hurricane would not hit until late August.

NEWS WORD BOX

hurricane
power outage
tropical storm

Just a few weeks later, Hurricane Emily hit Mexico. It caused power outages and flooding that damaged many homes and businesses.

Scientists say that this year could be a particularly stormy one. They predict that there will be between 12 and 15 tropical storms this year. Between seven and nine of those storms could become hurricanes, they say.

MORE FACTS ABOUT HURRICANES

- The center of a hurricane is called the eye.
- A weather system is called a "tropical storm" if its winds reach 35 miles an hour. If its winds reach 74 miles per hour, it is upgraded from a tropical storm to a hurricane.

THINK ABOUT THE NEWS

- Hurricanes and other bad weather can cause damage and power outages. If you were to put together a kit of supplies to have on hand if the power goes out, what would you put in that kit?