

HURRICANE KATRINA

Hurricane Katrina was costliest natural disaster, as well as one of the five deadliest hurricanes, in the history of the United States. The storm is currently ranked as the third most intense United States landfalling tropical cyclone, behind only the 1935 Labor Day hurricane and Hurricane Camille in 1969. Overall, at least 1,245 people died in the hurricane and subsequent floods, making it the deadliest United States hurricane since the 1928 Okeechobee hurricane. Total property damage was estimated at \$108 billion (2005 USD).

Katrina caused severe destruction along the Gulf coast from central Florida to Texas, much of it due to the storm surge. The most significant number of deaths occurred in New Orleans, Louisiana, which flooded as its levee system failed, in many cases hours after the storm had moved inland. Eventually 80% of the city and large tracts of neighboring parishes became flooded, and the floodwaters lingered for weeks.

However, the worst property damage occurred in coastal areas, such as Mississippi beachfront towns; over 90 percent of these were flooded. Boats and casino barges rammed buildings, pushing cars and houses inland; water reached 6–12 miles (10–19 km) from the beach.