



HURRICANE FACT SHEET

History of Hurricanes in New England

Since 1900, thirty-nine tropical systems have impacted New England. Twenty-five were hurricanes, while fourteen were of tropical storm strength. Any tropical storm or hurricane is capable of bringing a combination of high winds, large storm surges and severe inland flooding along rivers and streams.

Of the 24 hurricanes, 9 made landfall along the southern New England coast. Of those 9 hurricanes, 7 of them were either of category 2 or 3 intensity based on the [Saffir-Simpson hurricane scale](#). Though the primary threat to New England is during August and September. The region has been affected as early as June, and as late as mid October.

The worst hurricane to affect New England was the great New England hurricane of 1938, which struck on September 21st. The great New England hurricane of 1938 struck at high tide, which coincided with the highest astronomical tide of the year, pushing a storm surge of 12 to 15 feet across the south coast and up the many bays and inlets including Narragansett and Buzzards Bays. Winds of over 120 mph blew across the coastal regions. The Blue Hill observatory, in Milton MA, recorded a sustained 5-minute wind of 121 mph and a peak gust to 186 mph.

Parts of interior Connecticut and Massachusetts not only bore the brunt of high winds, but also experienced severe river flooding as rain from the hurricane combined with heavy rains earlier that week to produce rainfall totals of up to 17 inches. This resulted in some of the worst river flooding ever experienced in parts of Connecticut and Massachusetts.

This powerful storm caused 564 deaths and over 1700 injuries. Nearly 9000 homes and businesses were destroyed with over 15000 damaged. The boating community was equally devastated with 2600 boats destroyed and 3300 damaged.

It is not uncommon for New England to be impacted more than once in a given season. The area has been impacted by two or more tropical storms or hurricanes in one season a total of 11 times. The most notable season was 1954, when hurricanes Carol, Edna, and Hazel impacted the region.



State of Connecticut
Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security

1635 - 1991		
Name	Event Date	Wind Speed
Hurricane of 1635	August, 1635	-
Hurricane of 1778	October 18-19, 1778	40 - 75mph
Hurricane of 1804	October 9, 1804	-
Gale of 1815	September 23, 1815	-
Hurricane of 1869	September 8, 1869	>50 mph
Hurricane of 1938	September 21, 1938	186 mph (max)
Hurricane Carol	September, 1954	-
Hurricane Donna	September, 1960	-
Hurricane Gloria	September 28, 1985	>70 mph
Hurricane Bob	August, 1991	>60 mph

