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## Sussex County keeps watch on Hurricane Earl

*Forecasters continue to call for storm to pass off Delaware coast, but 40 mph winds, large waves, beach erosion expected*

**FOR IMMEDIATE  
RELEASE**

**1630 Hours, Thursday  
Sept. 2, 2010**

A hurricane watch and tropical storm warning remain in effect for all of Sussex County as Hurricane Earl threatens to edge the coast with gusty winds, fierce waves and some tidal flooding, possibly beginning late tonight.

The National Hurricane Center's forecast continues to call for the center of the Category 3 storm, now with sustained winds of 125 mph, to pass approximately 150 miles east of Fenwick Island, Del., early Friday afternoon. Coastal areas especially should expect tropical storm-force winds of about 40 mph, with some gusts over 55 mph, 5- to 10-foot waves in the surf zone, deadly rip currents, minor tidal flooding and as much as 2 inches of rain as a result of Hurricane Earl. Inland locations, however, are expected to experience lower wind speeds and lighter rainfall throughout the event.

The storm is then expected to race off toward New England late in the afternoon Friday, leaving Delaware with an otherwise picture-perfect Labor Day weekend.

“Although the forecast has changed little, that should not lull the public into a false sense of security,” EOC Director Joseph L. Thomas said. “Make no mistake, the mid-Atlantic is flirting with a very dangerous storm and forecasts can change. But from all the models and forecasts we’ve seen and the conversations we’ve had with the director of the National Hurricane Center, the most severe weather looks like it will stay off our coast.”

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“But there will be gusty winds, there will be some rain, and there will be areas of minor tidal flooding, to say the least, beginning late tonight and lasting throughout the day Friday,” Mr. Thomas said. “So the public needs to remain on guard and be ready to ride out the next 18 to 24 hours.”

Rough surf, rip currents and beach erosion continue to pose the greatest threat, beginning in advance of Earl and lasting throughout the weekend.

Sussex County reminds residents and property owners to secure loose objects, such as lawn chairs and trash cans, to prevent storm winds from turning those items into potential projectiles. Also, residents in low-lying tidal areas should move vehicles to higher ground, make sure submersible pumps are working and check storm drains to ensure they are clear of debris.

With this storm, there is the possibility of downed trees and fallen power lines throughout the county. The public should be cautious, and should never approach downed power lines. If there are downed power lines, members of the public should contact the proper authorities.

The Sussex County EOC encourages residents and visitors to continue monitoring the tropics and conditions as they deteriorate. For updates, stay tuned to local television and radio stations, the Sussex County EOC Web site at [www.sussexcountyde.gov/services/storm](http://www.sussexcountyde.gov/services/storm), and the County’s Twitter feeds at [www.twitter.com/sussex\\_pio](http://www.twitter.com/sussex_pio) and [www.twitter.com/SussexCtyDE\\_EOC](http://www.twitter.com/SussexCtyDE_EOC). The public should also monitor the National Weather Service, at [www.nws.noaa.gov/er/phi](http://www.nws.noaa.gov/er/phi), for the latest forecast.

Sussex County is encouraging those planning to visit the area for the upcoming holiday weekend to carefully monitor conditions and exercise caution if going out onto local beaches. Swimming may not be advisable in the days ahead. For those who do venture into the water, always swim where lifeguards are present and obey any advisories or closures.

For helpful tips on what to do in preparation for a hurricane, including evacuation maps and preparedness brochures, visit [www.sussexcountyde.gov/services/storm](http://www.sussexcountyde.gov/services/storm).

For more information, contact the Sussex County EOC at (302) 855-7801.

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**Media calls should be directed to EOC spokeswoman Debra Jones at (302) 855-7801 or Sussex County Chief of Public Information Chip Guy at (302) 854-5000.**