

Hurricane katrina

Business



The 2005 hurricane season was catastrophic, causing damage throughout the Atlantic Basin (“NOAA news online”). Five storm names were retired, the entire list was used, and more were needed due to the record number of storms (“NOAA news online”). However, the worst storm of the season was Hurricane Katrina, which devastated New Orleans. It was one of the most damaging and intense storms in hurricane history (“Hurricane Katrina”).

It destroyed the levee system, wreaked havoc on the economy, and caused a massive rebuilding effort that is still ongoing today. The storm formed over the Bahamas on August 23, 2005 (“Hurricane Katrina”). The storm quickly grew in strength and soon became a hurricane. It struck South Florida with winds of 80m/ph (“Hurricane Katrina”). After weakening slightly over land, though maintaining hurricane strength, it entered the warm, favorable environment of the Gulf of Mexico (“Hurricane Katrina”). Hurricanes become more powerful when the water is warmer than 80 degrees F.

Katrina then strengthened from category 1 to category 5 intensity with winds of 175mph in less than 48 hours (“Hurricane Katrina”). Despite this strengthening, people in New Orleans were still not worried because the storm was expected to hit the Florida Panhandle (“Surviving Katrina”). However, the storm then tracked farther west towards Louisiana. As it approached land, it weakened due to an eyewall replacement cycle, which happens when a hurricane “overstrengthens,” but it still made landfall with 125m/ph winds and a 30 ft. storm surge (“Hurricane Katrina”). The surge was the storm’s most destructive feature.

Over land once more, it weakened rapidly, but its remnants still caused damage as far north as Quebec. The remnants also caused a tornado outbreak in the eastern United States ("Hurricane Katrina"). Although it did damage in many places, Hurricane Katrina did the most damage in New Orleans. Levees all over the city breached, and 80% of the city was left underwater ("Hurricane Katrina"). Only the French Quarter was spared ("Surviving Katrina").

1,336 people were killed, and damage was over \$81 billion ("Surviving Katrina"). The lower ninth ward was the most badly damaged neighborhood in the city (Gaines). Sadly, most of the flooding could have been easily avoided had the city's levee systems been up to par before the storm hit (Warrick and Grunwald). The levees were built in a way that channeled water along canals (Warrick and Grunwald). This put more strain on the levees along the canals and caused them to collapse (Warrick and Grunwald). In addition, many of the levees were built on unstable land.

The ground got too wet very easily, which caused even more levees to fail (Warrick and Grunwald). There were other flaws too, and New Orleans was supposed to be protected from a category 3 hurricane (Warrick and Grunwald). This provides additional proof that the levee system was not that strong. Additional damage was done to the economy. Oil rigs throughout the gulf were destroyed or badly damaged ("Surviving Katrina"). As a result, gas and oil prices rose, affecting people and businesses throughout the country ("Surviving Katrina").

Public utilities also took a long time to recover (“ Surviving Katrina”). In addition, many people lost their jobs when businesses were destroyed and had no money to rebuild as a result (“ Hurricane Katrina: Understanding Controversy and Society”). Rebuilding from the hurricane is a difficult process that is still ongoing today (Gaines). Many people that lost everything in the storm did not try to rebuild at all. 80% of African-Americans in the city left because they were too poor to rebuild (“ Hurricane Katrina: Understanding Controversy and Society”). They moved inland where hurricanes did not happen (“ Hurricane Katrina: Understanding Controversy and Society”).

For the people who stayed, it would take a huge amount of time to reconstruct their lives (“ Surviving Katrina”). Red tape stopped or slowed the process for most of them (Schleifstein). In addition, most people are too poor to buy flood insurance (Schleifstein). FEMA has been criticized for not doing enough to help the people affected by the storm (“ Hurricane Katrina: Understanding Controversy and Society”). As of 2008, 12, 000 people were still homeless from the storm (“ Hurricane Katrina: Understanding Controversy and Society”). However, significant progress has been made in other areas (Gaines).

The levee system has been rebuilt, and it no longer has the weaknesses that caused them to fail (Warrick and Grunwald). They have been strengthened to make up for the weaker soil underneath (Warrick and Grunwald). There is also a 1. 8-mile long storm surge barrier being built to minimize the impact of a storm surge like Katrina’s. Also, the city’s buildings are gradually being rebuilt (Gaines).

Businesses have been reopened and tourists are returning to visit the city (“Hurricane Katrina: Understanding Controversy and Society”). Hurricane Katrina’s effects were so devastating that the storm rivaled some of the worst Hurricanes in U. S. history, including Andrew and Camille (“Hurricane Katrina”). It will certainly not be forgotten by the people of New Orleans even after their city is back to normal (Gaines). As a result, New Orleans will never be the same (Gaines).