



NOAA NATIONAL OCEANIC AND
ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE



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NOAA hurricane team to embark on U.S. Gulf Coast Awareness Tour

Public and media invited to tour hurricane hunter aircraft

NOAA hurricane experts will visit five U.S. Gulf Coast cities aboard a NOAA hurricane hunter aircraft to raise awareness about storm threats and the danger of being caught without a personal hurricane plan. The five-day tour begins May 19 and advances NOAA's effort to build a [Weather-Ready Nation](#) through outreach and effective communications on the steps necessary to prepare for a hurricane.

"The U.S. was spared from a hurricane last year, but that does not mean we will be as fortunate during the 2014 season," said Rick Knabb, Ph.D., director of NOAA's National Hurricane Center. "Prepare for a hurricane now before one threatens your area, and find out if you are in a hurricane evacuation zone."

Knabb, along with senior hurricane specialist Daniel Brown and storm surge team leader Jamie Rhome, will travel with the crew when the aircraft visits Corpus Christi, Tex.; Houston, Tex.; New Orleans, La.; Tallahassee, Fla.; and Tampa, Fla. The public and media are invited to tour the aircraft and meet the team.

The NOAA WP-3D Orion turboprop aircraft is used primarily by scientists on research missions to study various elements of a hurricane, flying through the eye of the storm several times each flight. The crew collects and transmits data by satellite directly to the National Hurricane Center so that forecasters can analyze and predict changes to the hurricane's path and strength.

Staff from local emergency management offices and the Federal Emergency Management Agency, non-profit organizations such as the American Red Cross, Federal Alliance for Safe Homes, and several local NOAA National Weather Service forecast offices will be part of the team at each stop.

NOAA has conducted the hurricane awareness tour for more than 30 years, alternating between the Gulf and Atlantic coasts, and is followed by NOAA's hurricane hazard education campaign during National Hurricane Preparedness Week, May 25 to 31. The Atlantic hurricane season begins June 1.

Public Tour Schedule:

- Mon., May 19: Corpus Christi Intl Airport, Corpus Christi, Tex., 3:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- Tue., May 20: Ellington Airport, Houston, Tex., 3:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- Wed., May 21: Lakefront Airport, New Orleans, La., 3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- Thur., May 22: Tallahassee Airport, Tallahassee, Fla., 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- Fri., May 23: Tampa International Airport, Tampa, Fla., 2:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

The NOAA WP-3D Orion is part of the agency's fleet of highly specialized research aircraft operated, managed and maintained by the [NOAA Office of Marine and Aviation Operations](#). The aircraft is piloted by officers of the [NOAA Corps](#) — one of the seven uniformed services of the United States — and based at the NOAA Aircraft Operations Center, located at MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, Fla.

NOAA's mission is to understand and predict changes in the Earth's environment, from the depths of the ocean to the surface of the sun, and to conserve and manage our coastal and marine resources. Join us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and our other [social media channels](#).

On the Web:

NOAA's National Hurricane Center: <http://www.hurricanes.gov>

NOAA's Aircraft Operations Center: <http://aoc.noaa.gov>

National Hurricane Preparedness Week: <http://www.hurricanes.gov/prepare>

NOAA's National Weather Service: <http://www.weather.gov>

FEMA: www.ready.gov

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