

Isaias produced eight tornadoes in



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Tropical Storm Isaias spawned eight tornadoes across six eastern Virginia localities on the morning of Aug. 4.

It was part of a larger outbreak that extended from North Carolina, where Isaias came ashore, northward to New Jersey and Pennsylvania. The most violent tornado killed two people and injured 14 in Bertie County, N.C.

As is typical for tropically spawned tornadoes, they all formed along the right side of the storm's path.

That's the part of the storm where shearing winds and buoyant air are most likely to overlap and cause tornadoes to spin up within the spiraling rain bands. In this case, the shear was greater due to an upper-level trough positioned to the northwest of Isaias over the Great Lakes. That meant stronger southwest to northeast winds blowing aloft over Virginia.

Virginia hasn't seen this many tornadoes during the month of August since 2004, when storms Bonnie, Charley and Gaston accounted for 16.

The following preliminary details are from surveys conducted by meteorologists from the National Weather Service in Wakefield in the days following the storm. They are listed in chronological order.

Hertford County, N.C., to Southampton County

- ◆ Crossed state line north of Como, N.C.
- ◆ Time: 2:37 a.m. to 2:41 a.m.
- ◆ Strength: EF-0, 65 mph.
- ◆ Width: 50 yards.
- ◆ Length: 3.1 miles.
- ◆ No injuries or significant damage.

Southampton County

- ◆ Courtland area.
- ◆ Time: 2:49 a.m. to 3:19 a.m.



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Cynthia Cooper searched last Wednesday for the personal items of a family member whose home was destroyed the day before when a tornado generated by Isaias tore through a rural mobile home neighborhood, killing two residents, near Windsor, N.C.

- ◆ Strength: EF-2, 120 to 125 mph.
- ◆ Width: 200 yards.
- ◆ Length: 15.9 miles.
- ◆ No reported injuries.
- ◆ The tornado formed southwest of Franklin along General Thomas Highway, then moved northwest into the U.S. Highway 58 corridor in Courtland. There, it overturned cars, damaged homes and blew the roof off a hotel. The tornado ended near the Sussex County line, southwest of Wakefield.
- ◆ Southampton County was last affected by a tornado on April 19, 2019.

Suffolk (first)

- ◆ Great Dismal Swamp to downtown Suffolk.
- ◆ Time: 3:02 a.m. to 3:30 a.m.
- ◆ Strength: EF-1, 100 mph.
- ◆ Width: 150 yards.
- ◆ Length: 20 miles (while preliminary, this appears to be the longest track for any tropically spawned tornado on record in Virginia.)
- ◆ No injuries.
- ◆ The tornado damaged at least eight downtown Suffolk buildings after moving north-

west out of the Great Dismal Swamp. It crossed Lake Meade and Lake Prince, then dissipated prior to entering Isle of Wight County.

Suffolk (second)

- ◆ Southwest of downtown Suffolk.
- ◆ Time: 3:08 a.m. to 3:22 a.m.
- ◆ Strength: EF-0, 80 mph.
- ◆ Width: 100 yards.
- ◆ Length: 11.7 miles.
- ◆ No injuries.
- ◆ A second tornado paralleled the path of the first, but offset slightly to the southwest through more rural areas. Most of its damage consisted of snapped or uprooted trees.
- ◆ Prior to these tornadoes, the most recent one to hit Suffolk was on May 11, 2019.

James City County

- ◆ Two Rivers Country Club, west of Williamsburg.
- ◆ Time: 4:13 a.m.
- ◆ Strength: EF-1, 85 to 90 mph.
- ◆ Width: 200 yards.
- ◆ Length: 0.8 miles.
- ◆ No reported injuries.
- ◆ The brief tornado emerged

from the James River and produced minor structural damage as it moved northwest through the River Oaks Road area.

◆ Another tropical storm, Michael on Oct. 11, 2018, caused the previous tornado report in James City County.

Gloucester County

- ◆ Near Middle Peninsula State Park.
- ◆ Time: 4:53 a.m. to 5 a.m.
- ◆ Strength: EF-1, 90 to 95 mph.
- ◆ Width: 250 yards.
- ◆ Length: 4.7 miles.
- ◆ No injuries.
- ◆ What began as a waterspout moved ashore at Middle Peninsula State Park, then moved north-northwest near the banks of the York River. The path of roof, siding and tree damage ended around Cappahosic Road.
- ◆ Gloucester's most recent tornado was during the April 2019, outbreak.

Lancaster County to Northumberland County

- ◆ Windmill Point to Kilmar