

Friday, July 31, 2020 – 10:45 am

Unfortunately, Isaias crossed over Hispaniola with a clearly defined eye and developed additional strength overnight – it is now a CAT1 hurricane. Isaias is still expected to make the classic hurricane curve as it travels up the southeastern coast – but where the curve happens is still in question. The models overnight increased the forecast strength and shifted the forecast track slightly westward – neither of which are in our favor.

The National Hurricane Center (NHC) 8am update indicates that there is still a large amount of uncertainty in the forecast. While the most favored forecast track is likely near or along the coast, as the NHC forecast cone indicates most of Virginia east of Charlottesville could still be a possibility for direct impacts. We'll need to watch Isaias very closely and should prepare now for the possibility of impacts from a CAT1 hurricane.

As of the 8am NHC advisory, Isaias was a CAT1 hurricane with sustained winds of 80mph. Hurricane winds currently extend 45 miles from the center and tropical force winds extend outward up to 205 miles. Isaias' winds continue to be heavily weighted to the north and right of the storm's center. On the current forecast track, Isaias will be near or east of the Florida peninsula on Saturday/Sunday and will be nearing the SC/NC border by early Monday afternoon.

Based on the 5am NHC update, the National Weather Service is currently forecasting winds in the 20-30s with gusts into the 40s for Isle of Wight. Currently, the most likely window for impacts would be Monday evening into Tuesday morning. The 8am NHC forecast currently gives Norfolk a 14% chance of seeing at least tropical storm force winds (39-49mph) (& 3% for strong tropical storm force winds (50-73mph) from Isaias. HOWEVER, the NHC notes that there is still a great amount of uncertainty in the forecast both related to speed (arrival timing), intensity and forecast track. Changes in any of these factors could impact the potential timing and impacts significantly in our area. With all of the uncertainty in the forecast, while we hope it stays well to our east, you should be planning for the possibility of at least tropical storm impacts (at a minimum) in our area by Monday morning.

We'll continue to monitor the storm and will provide updates as warranted.

