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An Above Average 2021 Hurricane Season Predicted

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Hurricane researchers are predicting an above average 2021 season for storms and hurricanes.

The researchers are predicting 17 named tropical storms during the 2021 season. They expect eight of the storms to become hurricanes and four to reach major hurricane strength. Major hurricane strength has sustained winds of 111 miles per hour or higher.

If their predictions are largely accurate, 2021 will have fewer storms and hurricanes than 2020 but more than the historical average.

The researchers base their predictions on 40 years of past hurricane seasons. They analyze global weather conditions such as Atlantic sea surface temperatures, sea level pressures and water temperatures in the central and eastern tropical Pacific.

As we prepare, here are some important terms you may hear:

- **Tropical Storm Watch**: Tropical storm conditions are possible in the area.
- **Hurricane Watch**: Hurricane conditions are possible in the area.
  Watches are issued 48 hours in advance of the anticipated onset of tropical storm force winds.
- **Tropical Storm Warning**: Tropical storm conditions are expected in the area.
- **Hurricane Warning**: Hurricane conditions are expected in the area.
  Warnings are issued 36 hours in advance of tropical storm force winds.
- **Eye**: Clear, sometimes well-defined center of the storm with calmer conditions.
- **Eye Wall**: Surrounding the eye, contains some of the most severe weather of the storm with the highest wind speed and largest precipitation.
- **Rain Bands**: Bands coming off the cyclone that produce severe weather conditions such as heavy rain, wind and tornadoes.
- **Storm Surge**: An often underestimated and deadly result of ocean water swelling as a result of a landfalling storm, and quickly flooding coastal and sometimes areas further inland.

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