

Category 1: Minimal damage

Winds of 74-95 mph and storm surges of 4-5 ft. No significant wind damage to well constructed buildings. Some damage is done to poorly constructed signs. Wind damage primarily occurs to mobile homes, shrubbery, trees, and foliage. Low lying roads are inundated by storm surge. Minor pier damage occurs.

Example: Danny, 1997

Category 2: Moderate damage

Winds of 96-110 mph and storm surges of 6-8 ft. Some roofing material, doors, windows of homes and businesses are damaged by winds. Considerable wind damage done to mobile homes and vegetation. Low lying roads are inundated by storm surge. Considerable damage done by storm surge and wave action to piers. Small craft in unprotected anchorages break their moorings.

Example: Flossy, 1956

Category 3: Extensive damage

Winds of 111-130 mph and storm surges of 9-12 ft. Winds cause structural damage to homes and utility buildings with a minor amount of curtainwall failure. Mobile homes are destroyed. Storm surge flooding destroys many smaller buildings while large buildings are damaged by floating debris. Terrain continuously lower than 10 feet above mean sea level is flooded.

Example: Andrew, 1992

Category 4: Extreme damage

Winds of 131-155 mph and storm surges of 13-18 ft. More extensive curtainwall failures with some complete roof failure on homes. Major damage to lower floors of homes and businesses from storm surge flooding. Terrain continuously lower than 15 feet above mean sea level is flooded.

Example: Audrey, 1957

Category 5: Catastrophic damage

Winds greater than 155 mph and storm surges greater than 18 ft. Complete roof failure of many homes and businesses. Complete structural failure of many small buildings. Major storm surge flooding to areas lower than 20 feet above mean sea level.

Example: Camille, 1969