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2023 Begins with Arlene: First Tropical Storm Set to Weaken

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The first tropical storm of the 2023 hurricane season has formed in the Atlantic, according to a 4:00 a.m. update from the National Hurricane Center. Dubbed Tropical Storm Arlene, it is currently situated approximately 165 miles west of the Dry Tortugas and is expected to weaken during the day.

Tropical Storm Arlene's maximum sustained winds are presently around 40 mph, and it is moving toward the south-southeast at 9 mph. The NHC predicts a gradual turn to the southeast within the next day. The storm is forecasted to devolve into a tropical depression today, degenerate into a remnant low by late tonight, and likely dissipate by Sunday.

Tropical storm-force winds are reported to be extending outward up to 70 miles from the center. Despite this, no coastal watches or warnings are currently in effect.

The primary land-based hazard from Arlene at this stage is rainfall. Southern Florida Peninsula may experience 1 to 2 inches of rainfall with localized higher amounts up to 5 inches. This could potentially result in isolated flash, urban, and small stream flooding impacts.

This storm comes in the wake of the [recent](#) National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) releasing its outlook for the 2023 Atlantic hurricane season, which predicts near-normal activity this year.

The report details a 40% chance of a near-normal season, with a 30% chance each of an above-normal and below-normal season. Forecasters anticipate 12 to 17 named storms this year, of which 5 to 9 could develop into hurricanes, and 1 to 4 could potentially escalate to major hurricanes.

However, this year's Atlantic hurricane season is forecasted to be less active compared to recent years due to a mix of competing oceanic and atmospheric conditions. Despite the predicted arrival of El Nino, which typically suppresses Atlantic hurricane activity, conditions in the tropical Atlantic Basin remain favorable for storm development.

NOAA is working to enhance its forecasting capabilities in light of these predictions. This includes upgrading its operational supercomputing system and introducing a new hurricane forecast model to extend the tropical cyclone outlook from five to seven days.

Officials are urging residents in hurricane-prone areas to prepare now, reminding them that, as demonstrated by Hurricane Ian, it only takes one hurricane to cause widespread devastation. Despite providing an outlook for overall seasonal activity, NOAA does not predict landfall. It plans to update the 2023 Atlantic seasonal outlook in early August, just prior to the historical peak of the season.