The GP Responder

June 2024

https://gp-cert.org

Vol. 5, Issue 2

Message from GP-CERT Leader, Gordon Holtby

I hope you enjoy this 16th Edition of The GP Responder. It is becoming increasingly difficult to avoid discussion on how 2024 may become one of the worst hurricane seasons on record. Unfortunately, we agree with this forecast, and ask that everyone in our community make plans early and stay vigilant.

While we normally have a number of articles on various topics, due to its importance, we have devoted a significant part of this issue to precisely why this season may be one for the record books. The article from Pedro DiNezio of the University of Colorado discusses exactly why 2024 has one of the worst possible combinations of climate conditions for fueling hurricanes.

The second item is a continuation of highlighting key members of the Command Team. Brian Sheftel is in charge of GP-CERT operations in the aftermath of a hurricane, and we are fortunate to have his expertise and energy on our team. The third item highlights the presentation this coming Thursday, June 20th by Sandra Tapfumaneyi, the new Sarasota County Emergency Operations Chief in our clubhouse – which will also be available via a Zoom link.

All residents are welcome to join the all-volunteer GP-CERT team. GP-CERT is about empowering our community – both educating our volunteers about disaster response, and communicating safety messages and information to our residents. If interested in learning more about GP-CERT, please reach out to any of the volunteers listed at the end of this newsletter for more information. Our next bi-monthly meeting is on Tuesday, July 9th, 2024 @ 6:30 pm in the craft room, so please feel free to join us at that time.

Sincerely,
Gordon Holtby
gordon.holtby@gmail.com / (847) 612-2571

Volunteers Needed!

GP-CERT is a volunteer organization that deploys in the aftermath of disasters in the community. There is a continued need for volunteers to assist in areas such as damage assessment, access control, communications, and triage (basic first aid). Volunteers will be assigned to tasks based upon their desires, skills and experience. Background/ training in these areas is encouraged but not required. The GP-CERT training and preparation will allow community members to respond and assist each other in those hours or days between the incident and the return of our property management staff. For more information or to volunteer, please go to the GP-CERT website at https://gp-cert.org or contact Gordon Holtby at gordon.holtby@gmail.com

La Niña is coming, raising the chances of a dangerous Atlantic hurricane season – an atmospheric scientist explains this climate phenomenon
written by Pedro Di Nezio, University of Colorado, Boulder

Previously published on THE CONVERSATION *and reprinted with permission.*

One of the big contributors to the record-breaking global temperatures over the past year – El Niño – is nearly gone, and its opposite, La Niña, is on the way. Whether that's a relief or not depends in part on where you live. Above-normal temperatures are still forecast across the U.S. in summer 2024. And if you live along the U.S. Atlantic or Gulf coasts, La Niña can contribute to the worst possible combination of climate conditions for fueling hurricanes.

Pedro DiNezio, an atmosphere and ocean scientist at the University of Colorado who studies El Niño and La Niña, explains why and what's ahead.

What is La Niña?

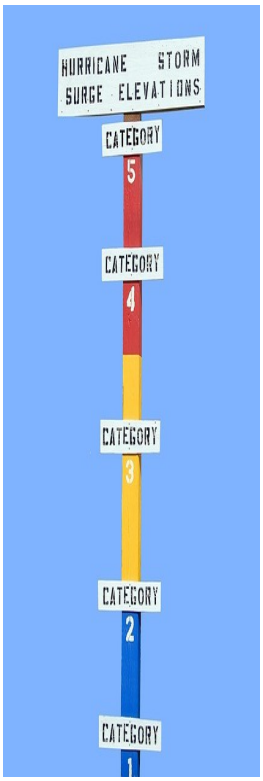
La Niña and El Niño are the two extremes of a recurring climate pattern that can affect weather around the world.

Forecasters know La Niña has arrived when temperatures in the eastern Pacific Ocean along the equator west of South America cool by at least half a degree Celsius (0.9 Fahrenheit) below normal. During El Niño, the same region warms instead.

Those temperature fluctuations might seem small, but they can affect the atmosphere in ways that ripple across the planet.

The tropics have an atmospheric circulation pattern called the Walker Circulation, named after Sir Gilbert Walker, an English physicist in the early 20th century. The Walker Circulation is basically giant loops of air rising and descending in different parts of the tropics.

Normally, air rises over the Amazon and Indonesia because moisture from the tropical forests makes the air more buoyant there, and it comes down in East Africa and the eastern Pacific. During La Niña, those loops intensify, generating stormier conditions where they rise and drier conditions where they descend. During El Niño, ocean heat in the eastern Pacific instead shifts those loops, so the eastern Pacific gets stormier.



Graphic courtesy of Pixabay (paulbr75)

EL Niño and La Niña also affect the jet stream, a strong current of air that blows from west to east across the U.S. and other mid-latitude regions.

During El Niño, the jet stream tends to push storms toward the subtropics, making these typically dry areas wetter. Conversely, mid-latitude regions that normally would get the storms become drier because storms shift away.

This year, forecasters expect a fast transition to La Niña – likely by late summer. After a strong El Niño, like the world saw in late 2023 and early 2024, conditions tend to swing fairly quickly to La Niña. How long it will stick around is an open question. This cycle tends to swing from extreme to extreme every three to seven years on average, but while El Niños tend to be short-lived, La Niñas can last two years or longer.

How does La Niña affect hurricanes?

Temperatures in the tropical Pacific also control wind shear over large parts of the Atlantic Ocean.

Wind shear is a difference in wind speeds at different heights or direction. Hurricanes have a harder time holding their column structure during strong wind shear because stronger winds higher up push the column apart.

La Niña produces less wind shear, removing a brake on hurricanes. That's not good news for people living in hurricane-prone regions like Florida. In 2020, during the last La Niña, the Atlantic saw a record 30 tropical storms and 14 hurricanes, and 2021 had 21 tropical storms and seven hurricanes.

Forecasters are already warning that this year's Atlantic storm season could rival 2021, due in large part to La Niña. The tropical Atlantic has also been exceptionally warm, with sea surface temperature-breaking records for over a year. That warmth affects the atmosphere, causing more atmospheric motion over the Atlantic, fueling hurricanes.

Graphic courtesy of Pixabay (Michelle_Raponi)

Does La Niña mean drought returns to the US Southwest?

The U.S. Southwest's water supplies will probably be OK for the first year of La Niña because of all the rain over the past winter. But the second year tends to become problematic. A third year, as the region saw in 2022, can lead to severe water shortages.

Drier conditions also fuel more extreme fire seasons in the West, particularly in the fall, when the winds pick up.

What happens in the Southern Hemisphere during La Niña?

The impacts of El Niño and La Niña are almost a mirror image in the Southern Hemisphere.

Chile and Argentina tend to get drought during La Niña, while the same phase leads to more rain in the Amazon. Australia had severe flooding during the last La Niña. La Niña also favors the Indian monsoon, meaning above-average rainfall. The effects aren't immediate, however. In South Asia, for example, the changes tend to show up a few months after La Niña has officially appeared.

La Niña is quite bad for eastern Africa, where vulnerable communities are already in a long-term drought.

Is climate change affecting La Niña's impact?

El Niño and La Niña are now happening on top of the effects of global warming. That can exacerbate temperatures, as the world saw in 2023, and precipitation can go off the charts.

Since summer 2023, the world has had 10 straight months of record-breaking global temperatures. A lot of that warmth is coming from the oceans, which are still at record-high temperatures.

La Niña should cool things a bit, but greenhouse gas emissions that drive global warming are still rising in the background. So while fluctuations between El Niño and La Niña can cause short-term temperature swings, the overall trend is toward a warming world.

We're continuing to highlight members of the Command Team. This month introduces CERT Operations Manager, Brian Sheftel.

Message from GP-CERT Operations, Brian Sheftel

My Firefighting and EMS career started over 30 years ago. I obtained my first certification in 1989 which was an Emergency Medical Technician. From 1990 to 1994 I took several certification classes which included Fire Instructor, Hazardous Materials Technician and Fire Officer One just to name a few. On March 27,1994 I started my career with the Meriden Connecticut Fire Department. Over my long career I was involved in many types of incidents such as building fires, weather related events, motor vehicle accidents, and medical emergencies. In September of 2020, I retired from the Fire Department as a Lieutenant.

During my days off, I ran a very successful self employment business as a legal process server called a Connecticut State Marshal. My primary duty was to serve and execute civil process directed to me from attorneys, courts or various state and federal agencies. I served foreclosures, civil summons, debt collection, wage and bank garnishments. I specialized in garnishments, which are a court ordered attachment to either an employer or a bank to which monies are deducted from wages or bank accounts in order to satisfy a debt.

I have been married for 30 years, and have two adult children who both reside in Connecticut. When I moved to Gran Paradiso in September of 2020, I joined the GP Cert Team. Currently I am in charge of CERT Operations. During an incident I will assume the role of Incident Commander.

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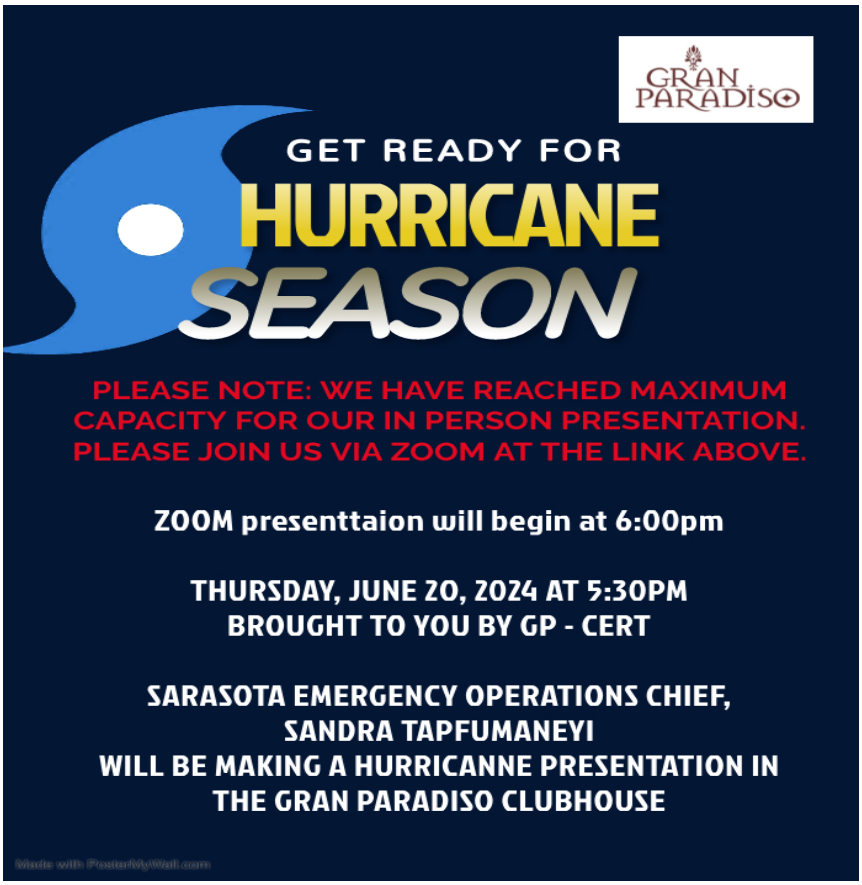

The Gran Paradiso Community Emergency Response Team (GP-CERT) has been formed to assist neighbors in the event of a natural or man-made disaster. The team is comprised of your neighbors who have undertaken the appropriate training to assist where needed.

Please submit articles and/or corrections to the newsletter publisher, Carole Myles, at cmyles252@gmail.com.

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GP Zone Map	https://gp-cert.org/?page_id=521

The GP Responder is a publication of the Gran Paradiso—Community Emergency Response Team. Our plan is to publish it every third month throughout the year. The GP Responder is forwarded to all residents by KW, our management company, and it is also available for viewing on the GP-CERT website at https://gp-cert.org

CERT COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM