Hurricane Risks Anything But Average

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All it takes is one Hurricane Matthew to turn forecasts on their heads

WAUKESHA, Wis., April 10, 2017 /PRNewswire/ -- In its 2016 hurricane forecast, Colorado State University (CSU) researchers predicted Atlantic hurricane activity to be about 95 percent of average.

Then came Hurricane Matthew.

The National Hurricane Center, which recently released a comprehensive report on the hurricane, indicated that Matthew was the deadliest Atlantic hurricane since Hurricane Stan in 2005, and that the massive storm cut power to about 3.5 million customers from Florida to Virginia.

"I think the takeaway from 2016 is that you never really know what's going to happen with hurricanes," said Russ Minick, chief marketing officer, Generac Power Systems. "Hurricane Matthew came as a surprise — certainly its intensity did. USA Today reported at the time that it had an economic impact to the U.S. of between $4 and $6 billion."

In a November 2016 press release, CSU acknowledged that it had underpredicted what had turned out to be a very active season. Their recent 2017 forecast said that the 2016 Atlantic hurricane season turned out to be 134 percent of average.

The unpredictable nature of hurricanes and other named storms is a primary reason that Generac encourages homeowners in coastal areas to prepare well in advance of a hurricane forming.

"Our newest generators make installation easier and quicker for homeowners," said Ray Stanek, sr. product manager, Generac. "But like any home improvement project, installing a home standby generator requires a bit of lead time. With that in mind, the best time to get a home standby generator is well in advance of any impending hurricane."

Certified Consulting Meteorologist Mark McGinnis said that it's not unusual for homeowners to only have a few days' notice before a hurricane hits.

"In El Niño years, tropical storms and hurricanes often form closer to the United States, in the Gulf of Mexico and the Western Caribbean," McGinnis said. "That means that landfall often occurs with only a few days' notice, unlike storms that form off the coast of West Africa, which are tracked for days and even weeks before threatening the United States."

The CSU Atlantic hurricane forecast for 2017 predicts a hurricane season that is similar to last year. However, in the university's announcement, Michael Bell, associate professor in the Department of Atmospheric Science, "cautioned coastal residents to take proper precautions."

"It takes only one storm near you to make this an active season," Bell said.

Generac encourages all homeowners to invest in protecting their homes as the risk of all weather related outages increases each year. "It's critical that they prepare now to protect their homes and families," Stanek said.

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About Generac

Generac Power Systems, Inc. (NYSE: GNRC) is a leading global supplier of backup power and prime power products, systems and engine-powered tools. Back in 1959, our founder was committed to designing, engineering and manufacturing the first affordable backup generator. Fifty-eight years later, the same dedication to innovation, durability and excellence has resulted in the company's ability to expand its industry-leading product portfolio into homes and small businesses, on job sites, and in industrial and mobile applications across the globe. Generac offers single engine backup and prime power systems up to 12 MW and paralleled solutions up to 100 MW, and uses a variety of fuel sources to support power needs for our customers. We are proud to be named, in back-to-back years, the Frost & Sullivan 2014 and 2015 North American Natural Gas Generator Set Company of the Year. Visit Generac.com for more information.

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