

Name: _____

10 Minutes with Science

The Hurricane

A hurricane is a tropical cyclone, or stormy system, of closed circulation around a center, commonly called the eye of the hurricane which is an area with low atmospheric pressure. Hurricanes turn counterclockwise and produce high winds that can be destructive and abundant rains that cause flooding.



Only a tropical cyclone formed in the Atlantic Ocean or the Caribbean Sea will be called a hurricane. If the tropical cyclone forms off the Asian continent or in the Pacific Ocean, it is called a typhoon. When a cyclone is produced in the southern hemisphere, it turns clockwise.

Despite its destructive effects, hurricanes and typhoons have an important function of moving heat from the tropics to warmer latitudes, which warms the planet's temperature and maintains stability.



Who names the hurricanes? In the United States, the National Center of Hurricanes chooses the name from a list prepared by the World Meteorological Organization, WMO, which is part of the United Nations.

Before establishing this system, hurricanes were named after the Catholic saint day on which it formed. During World War II, the meteorologists who forecasted the hurricane gave them the names of their wives or relatives.

Although hurricanes are very destructive, typhoons or cyclones coming from Asia and the Pacific are much bigger, more destructive, and can measure twice the size of hurricanes.

Can you name a hurricane?