

Hurricane Watch Net Activating for Hurricane Joaquin

From ARRL:

[UPDATED 2015-09-30 @ 1940 UTC The National Hurricane Center (NHC) has made it official: It's Hurricane Joaquin, a Category 1 storm. But the NHC said that Joaquin is gaining strength and could become a major hurricane during the next couple of days. The Hurricane Watch Net (HWN) activated at 1500 UTC today (September 30) on 14.325 MHz (after nightfall, the net will convene on 7.268 MHz) to gather observer reports. **WX4NHC** at the NHC is not active at this time. Currently packing maximum sustained winds of 85 MPH, Hurricane Joaquin was about 190 miles east-northeast of the central Bahamas as of 1800 UTC. A hurricane warning is in effect for the central Bahamas, including Cat Island, the Exumas, Long Island, Rum Cay, and San Salvador.

Due to the close proximity to land, whether or not this storm makes landfall in the Bahamas, the Hurricane Watch Net will be active until the storm is no longer a threat in this region, said HWN Manager Bobby Graves, KB5HAV. Everyone along the US East Coast should keep a close eye on this system. The current forecast brings Joaquin near the New England area by late Sunday or early Monday.

During HWN activation, the net control station will request measured/observed ground-truth data from stations in the affected area. The HWN also remains available to provide back-up communication to official agencies, such as emergency operations centers and Red Cross officials in the affected area. The net also will gather and report to FEMA officials in the NHC any information on significant damage. Stations should not check into the net unless specifically requested to do so.

The NHC **reported** at 1800 UTC that Joaquin was moving toward the southwest at nearly 6 MPH. A general motion toward the west-southwest or southwest is expected to continue through tonight, the NHC said. A turn toward the northwest and a decrease in forward speed are forecast on Thursday or Thursday night. The center of Joaquin is expected to move near or over portions of the central Bahamas tonight and Thursday.

According to the NHC, Hurricane conditions are expected to reach portions of the Central Bahamas by Thursday morning. Winds are expected to reach tropical storm strength in the warning area tonight, making outside preparations difficult or dangerous. Preparations to protect life and property should be rushed to completion, the NHC said.

Dangerous storm surges are possible, and Joaquin is expected to produce 5 to 10 inches of rain, with isolated maximum amounts of 15 inches possible over San Salvador and Rum Cay through Friday morning.

The NHC said swells generated by Joaquin will affect portions of the Bahamas over the next few days and will start affecting portions of Florida's eastern coast and the US southeast coast by Friday. These swells are likely to cause life-threatening surf and rip current conditions, the NHC predicted.

We're monitoring the situation and the forecasts regularly. Like most, we're waiting to see which way the storm will go, ARRL Emergency Preparedness Manager Mike Corey, K1IU, told the ARRL Field Organization leadership in the areas that could be affected by Joaquin. ARRL Headquarters will be in touch with our National VOAD partners, FEMA, and NHC as things develop.

Visit the **HWN** website for the latest information on this storm and HWN activation plans.