

Wash DC -- Flood Warnings, Tornado Watches Issued

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Remnants of Hurricane Jeanne Expected to Bring 2-4 Inches of Rain

By William Branigin

Washington Post Staff Writer

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The remnants of Hurricane Jeanne swept into the Washington, D.C., area today, bringing heavy rains, flash flood warnings and widespread tornado watches affecting the District, Virginia and Maryland.

At least one death was reported: that of a southwestern Virginia woman whose mobile home was hit by a flash flood.

As the system, now a tropical depression, pushed into the area from the south, the National Weather Service declared tornado watches this afternoon for the capital and surrounding jurisdictions until 9 p.m. Eastern time and a flash flood warning for Northern Virginia's Loudoun County until 8:15 p.m.

Emergency management officials in Loudoun reported that many county roads were flooded and that Route 50 was closed between Aldie and Middleburg. In the town of Purcellville, part of Main Street was closed by the flooding. The weather service predicted an additional one to two inches of rainfall in the area before early evening, when the rain was expected to taper off.

The service warned that several creeks in the county were expected to overflow and cautioned motorists not to try crossing bridges or low spots covered by water.

Loudoun canceled all after-school activities because of the potential

for flooding and said that, if necessary, it was prepared to implement a contingency plan if school buses were not able to make it to their destinations. Under the plan, the students would be taken back to certain schools to wait for their parents to pick them up.

Among the places affected by the tornado watches were the Virginia counties of Arlington, Fairfax and Prince William and the cities of Alexandria, Falls Church and Manassas. In Maryland, tornado watches were also in effect until 9 p.m. for Montgomery and Prince George's counties, the city of Baltimore and a number of other jurisdictions across the state.

The watches were declared after Jeanne moved into Virginia, dumping heavy rain. The storm prompted widespread flood warnings in Virginia and Maryland.

Before its arrival in the Washington area, Jeanne's remnants left flooding and wind damage across a swath of the southeastern United States after slamming into Florida early Sunday.

In Patrick County, Va., in the southwestern part of the state, a woman was reported killed this morning when flood waters swept her mobile home off its foundation.

Authorities said rescuers found her body this morning about 75 yards from her mobile home, which had been turned on its side by waters that flooded an adjacent creek about a mile north of the border with North Carolina. The mobile home had about two feet of water inside it, Sheriff David Hubbard said, according to AP.

Jeanne dumped as much as 12 inches of rain in Patrick County, causing widespread flooding throughout the area.

Two Jeanne-related deaths were also reported today in South Carolina, where the storm flooded roads and spawned tornadoes. One man died near Ridgeway, S.C., early today when his mobile home was apparently hit by a tornado, and another man was killed late Monday near Winnsboro, S.C., when his car ran off a rain-slicked road and hit a utility pole, the Associated Press reported.

As the storm moved northeast, the National Weather Service announced flood warnings or watches extending from Georgia to New York.

By 11 a.m., the center of Tropical Depression Jeanne was about 20 miles southwest of Roanoke, Va., and moving northeast at 21 mph, the National Weather Service reported. It said the system was packing sustained winds of up to 30 mph and producing "significant rain through the Appalachians and Mid-Atlantic region."

Jeanne was forecast to dump two to four inches of rain through Tuesday evening, with higher amounts possible from the central Appalachian Mountains through the Mid-Atlantic.