

Hurricane Nate unleashes flooding, power outages on Gulf Coast

Hurricane Nate brought a burst of flooding and power outages to the Gulf Coast on Sunday — but the region, parts of which have continued to rebuild after Hurricane Katrina more than a decade ago, was largely spared of catastrophic damage.

Nate — the first hurricane to make landfall in Mississippi since Katrina in 2005 — quickly lost power, with its winds diminishing to a tropical depression as it pushed northward into Alabama and toward Georgia with heavy rain. It was a Category 1 hurricane when it pushed ashore outside Biloxi early Sunday, its second landfall after initially hitting southeastern Louisiana on Saturday evening.

The storm surge from the Mississippi Sound littered Biloxi's main beachfront highway with debris and flooded a casino's lobby and parking structure overnight.

By dawn, however, Nate's receding floodwaters didn't reveal any signs of widespread damage in the city where Katrina had leveled thousands of beachfront homes and businesses.

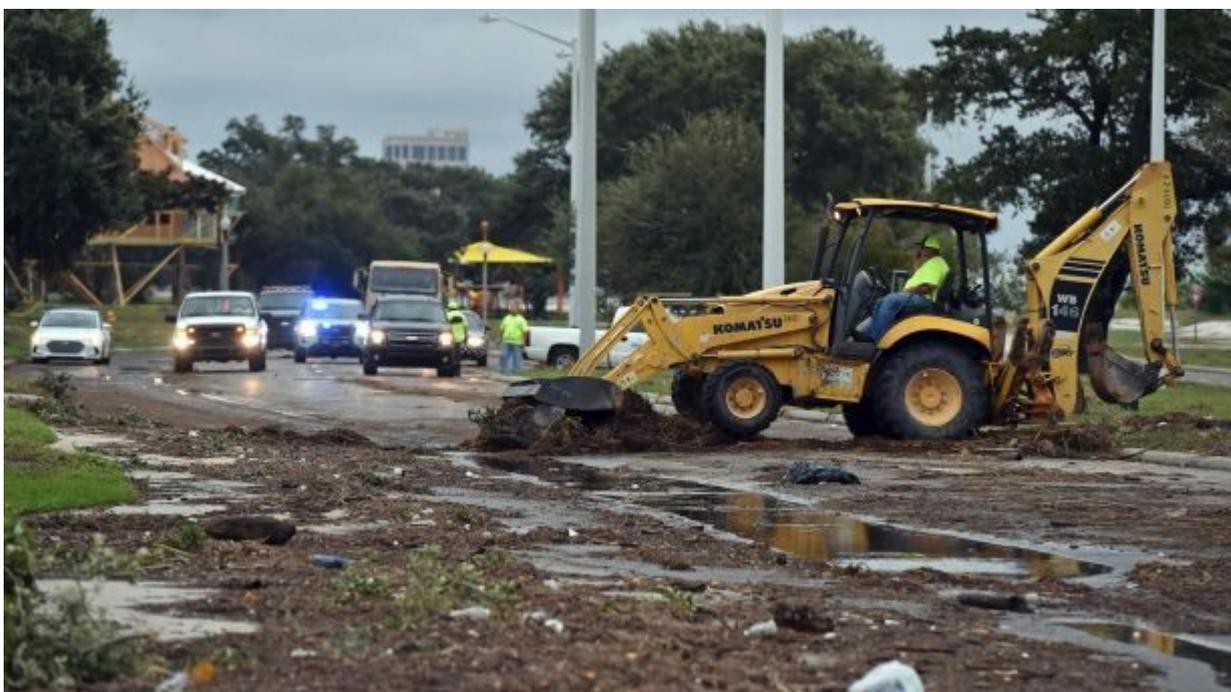


A sailboat beached near Margaritaville and the Golden Nugget in Biloxi, Miss., on Sunday, after Hurricane Nate made landfall. (Justin Sellers/The Clarion-Ledger via AP)

No storm-related deaths or injuries were immediately reported.

As Nate roared ashore, the hurricane-spawned storm surge in coastal areas, flooding the parking structure of the Golden Nugget casino in Biloxi and pushing water several blocks deep into the city.

“It kind of surprised us,” Mike Kovacevich, who lives two blocks north of U.S. 90, told Biloxi officials on their Facebook page. “We didn’t expect to be this deep. It come in pretty good — a lot of water.”



Biloxi public works employees clearing debris from U.S. 90 in Biloxi on Sunday. (Justin Sellers/The Clarion-Ledger via AP)

Around 28,000 customers from multiple utility companies were without power in southern portions of the state, but officials from Mississippi Power, which covers all three counties on the state’s Gulf Coast, told Fox News they expect to fully restore power by Sunday night.

“Following Hurricane Nate, our dedicated team at Mississippi Power is actively assisting our customers and restoring service,” Mississippi Power CEO Anthony Wilson said. “The safety of our customers and employees is our top priority. We

know how important electrical service is to restoring quality of life after a storm and we are working hard for our customers and their businesses.”

Combined, more than 100,000 residents in Mississippi and Alabama were without power Sunday morning, although some were starting to get electricity restored. About 6,800 customers lost power in Florida, Gov. Rick Scott said.

Mississippi’s Gulf Coast casinos got approval to reopen in midmorning after closing Saturday as the storm approached.



Pumpkins strewn around Highway 90 along the Gulf of Mexico in Pass Christian, Miss., in the aftermath of Hurricane Nate. (AP Photo/Gerald Herbert)

In Alabama, the storm flooded homes and cars on the coast and inundated at least one major road in downtown Mobile.

At sunrise in Pensacola Beach, Florida, a small front-end loader scraped sand off a parking lot and returned it to the nearby beach. Sand also was blown onto the decks of beachside bars and restaurants.

In Alabama, Dauphin Island Mayor Jeff Collier said he woke up around 3 a.m. Sunday to discover knee-deep water in his yard. Although some homes and cars on the island had flooded, Collier said he hadn’t heard of anyone needing rescue.

“We didn’t think it would be quite that bad,” he said. “It kind of snuck up on us in the wee hours of the morning.”

Before Nate sped past Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula late Friday and entered the Gulf of Mexico, it drenched Central America with rains that left at least 22 people dead. Still, Nate didn't approach the intensity of Harvey, Irma and Maria — powerful storms that left behind massive destruction during 2017's exceptionally busy hurricane season.

"We are thankful because this looked like it was going to be a freight train barreling through the city," said Vincent Creel, a spokesman for the city of Biloxi.

Fox News' Travis Fedschun and The Associated Press contributed to this report.

Source: <http://www.foxnews.com/us/2017/10/08/hurricane-nate-unleashes-flooding-power-outages-on-gulf-coast.html>

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