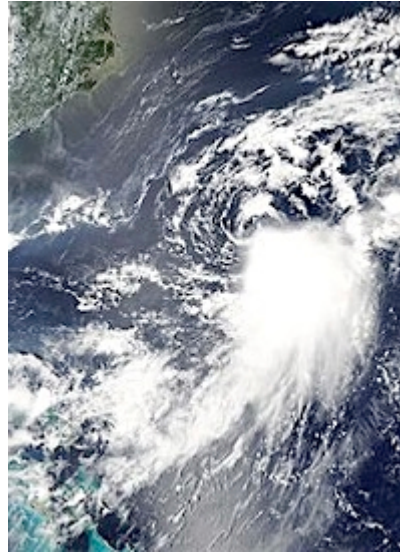




Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on August 29, 2011

Hurricane Irene: Aftermath

Though Hurricane Irene ? later downgraded to a tropical storm ? did not cause anywhere the level of devastation initially predicted, it still made a major impact on the East Coast. At least 24 are known dead, thousands are without power, and some areas along the east coast are still under water. Estimates of the damages are in the billions of dollars.



The state of Vermont has been declared a [federal disaster area](#), with many small towns experiencing historic flooding. According to Fox News, Hundreds of Vermonters were told to leave their homes after Irene dumped several inches of rain on the landlocked state. Governor Peter Shumlin called it the worst flooding the state has ever seen. As well, he added, there is extraordinary infrastructure damage across the state. One video shows a small bridge over Williams River which had stood since 1870 swept away by rushing floodwaters.

Every road in the state of Vermont, with the exception of two major highways, was closed at some point over the weekend as a result of the storms.

Similarly, many towns in [upstate](#) New York particularly in the Catskill Mountains have been flooded by overflowing rivers and streams. Houses in low-lying areas, such as in the town of Windham, are currently under water. Michael Scarey, the local fire chief there, reports that Windham has been wiped out.

Along the coast, most of those who perished in the storms drowned, while others were hit by falling debris.

By the end of the weekend, New York City restored its public transportation, though it is currently limited, while Long Island, Philadelphia, and parts of New Jersey are following suit. Some northern areas in New Jersey are as yet unable to restore service because of flooding and landslides.

More than 500,000 homes and businesses across New England are without electricity, while in Canada, the number is slightly lower, at nearly 300,000. In total, over five million Americans are experiencing blackouts as a result of Irene.

The impacts of this storm will be felt for some time, noted President Obama. And the recovery effort will last for weeks or longer.

The Kinetic Analysis Corporation has [estimated](#) the extent of damage caused to areas across the coast at approximately \$10 billion. Others contend, however, that the figure will be significantly higher when lost business including the cancellation of 11,000 flights is factored in. The Consumer Federation of



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America noted \$5 billion in personal wind-damage claims, with an additional \$2 billion in flood-related claims.

Because a federal state of emergency was declared in several states, however, federal funds will cover much of the cost of the disaster cleanup. In response to the hurricane, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has suspended payments to some of its other recovery efforts in order to pay for this weekends damage.

As [noted](#) by the Heritage Foundation's Mike Brownfield, All indications are that state and local governments took careful steps to ensure that their citizens were prepared," thus greatly minimizing the cost in lives and damages.

New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg in particular had a lot to prove, after his disastrous mishandling of the two-foot snowstorm that plagued the city last December. Bloomberg was making up for his failures during the blizzard last year, said Doug Muzzio, professor of public affairs at the City University of New York. I think he did it successfully. He was on the television constantly he directed the citys response."



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