

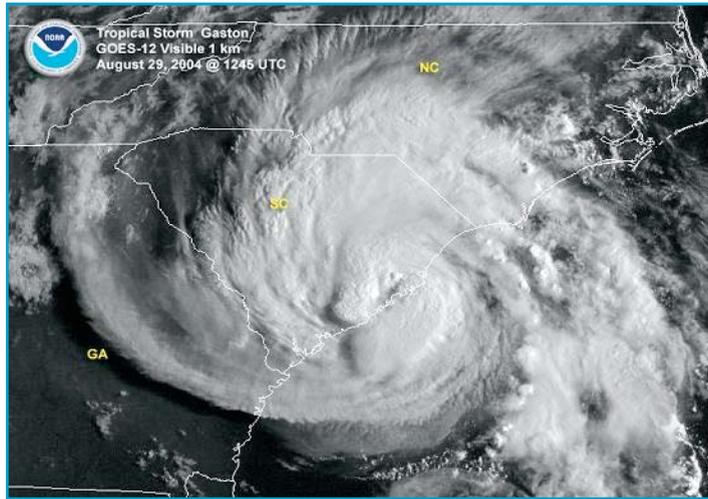
# 2004 HISTORICAL HURRICANE SEASON

Although the first tropical depression of the season did not form until July 31, 2004, a total of 15 named storms developed throughout the 2004 tropical season. With more than 3,000 deaths across the Atlantic Basin and some \$42 billion dollars in damages, this was the costliest hurricane season on record, according to the National Hurricane Center. South Carolina experienced effects from seven of these storms including Alex, Bonnie, Charley, Frances, Gaston, Ivan, and Jeanne.

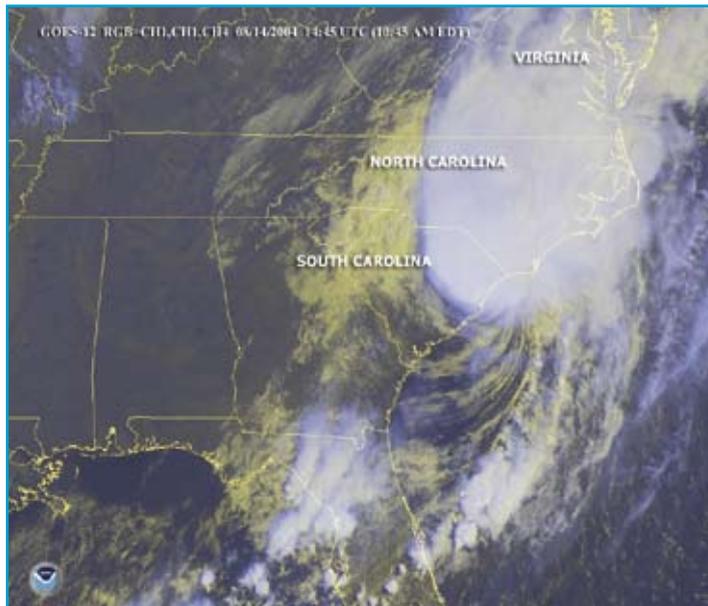
Heavy tropical rainfall in August and September flooded many rivers and streams across South Carolina. Northeastern sections of South Carolina received the most significant rainfall during the month of August with radar estimates of five to ten inches common across the Pee Dee and north coastal regions. September storms delivered similar totals to the Upstate, midlands, and Pee Dee regions. Due to the overlap of precipitation in the northeast part of the state and upslope flow in the mountains, flooding became a primary concern to residents across the Pee Dee and northern Upstate regions. In fact, 24.25 inches of rain fell at Caesars Head in the month of September alone. The highest individual storm total precipitation amounts recorded during the 2004 season were 12.17" at Caesars Head (Frances), 12.09" at McClellanville (Bonnie/Charley), and 10.50" at Kingstree (Gaston).

Perhaps the most memorable impact during the 2004 hurricane season in South Carolina will be the record 76 tornadoes that affected the state during the 47-day period from August 12 through September 27. The former annual record number of tornadoes occurred in 1995 when 54 twisters hit the state. Frances spawned 46 tornadoes with 41 on September 7, 2004, which shattered the old daily record of 23 from Tropical Storm Beryl in 1994. Details on the number of tornadoes by county during 2004 (through December 8, 2004) are shown at right.

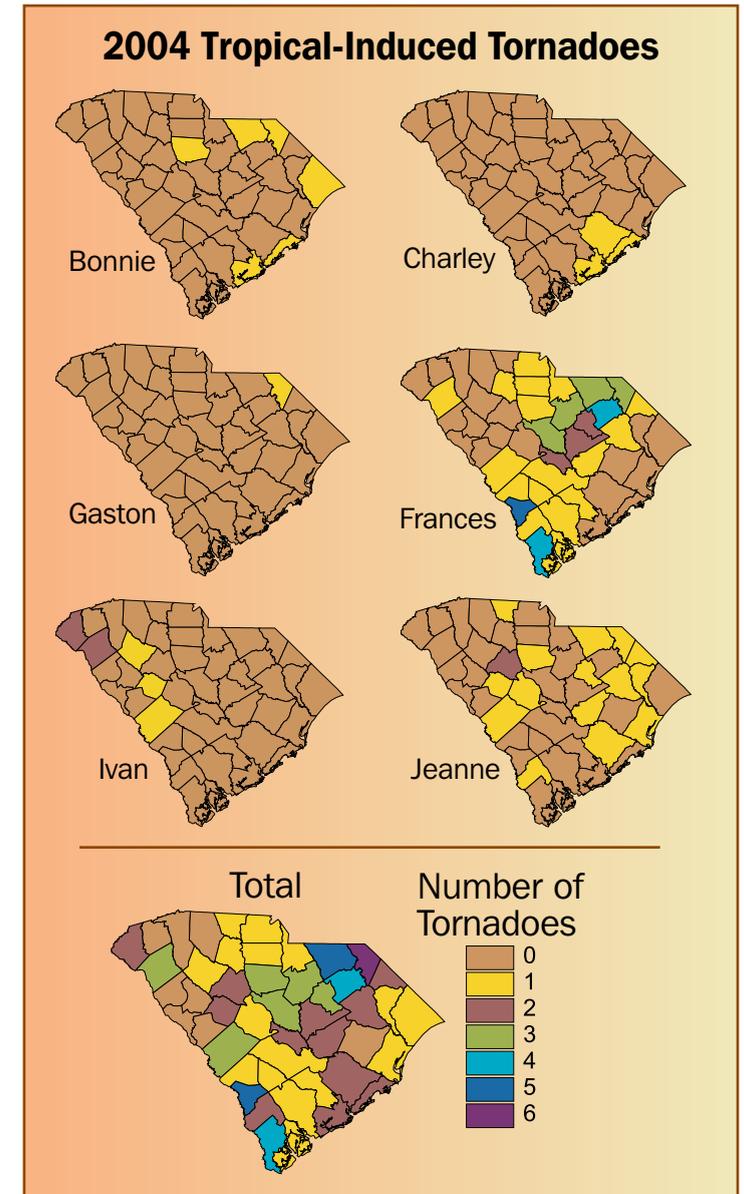
According to the South Carolina Insurance News Service, \$110 million of insurance claims accumulated over the summer months. Hundreds of injuries and at least one death occurred during the period from August 12 through September 27, 2004, when tropical cyclones plagued the state with flooding rains, high winds, and tornadoes—another reason why the South Carolina State Climatology Office emphasizes the importance of weather-related emergency preparedness.



Hurricane Gaston August 29, 2004, at 1245 UTC.



Hurricane Charley made landfall near Georgetown, South Carolina, with 75 mph winds at 1445 UTC August 14, 2004.



Wes Tyler



Rick Ullom, Southeast River Forecast Center