

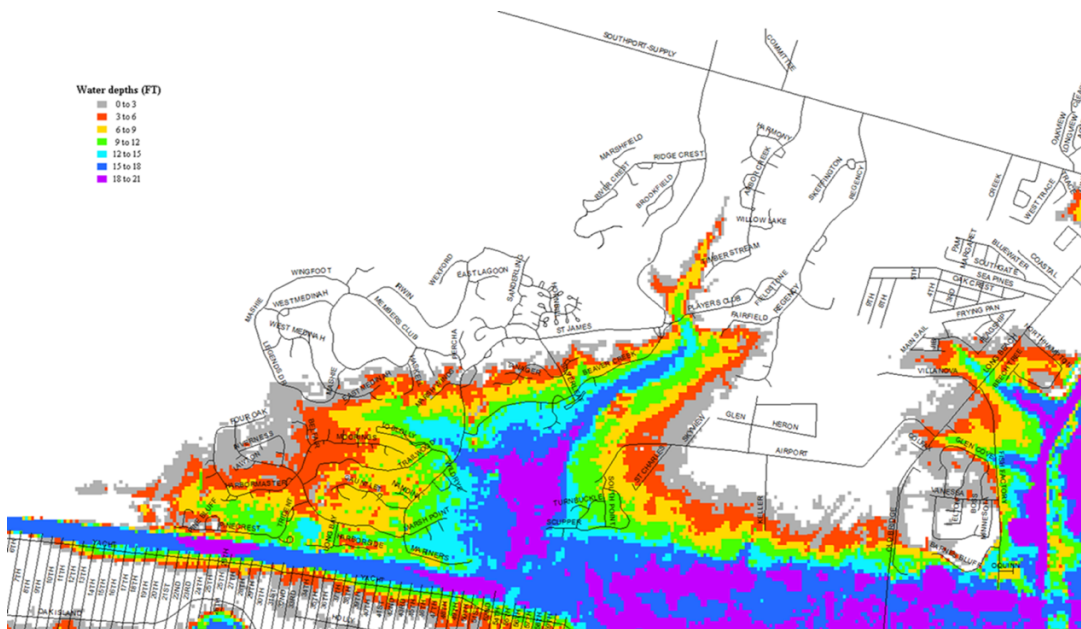


## STORM SURGE Yes, it could affect St. James.

By Chris Contney, St. James Emergency Management Work Group

**Hurricane Season officially started June 1<sup>st</sup>. Do you have a plan for how you will protect yourself and your property if a severe weather event impacts St. James? Most projections say that this will be an above-average year for tropical activity and storms. The time to plan and prepare is now, before a storm.**

Storm Surge is a wall of water pushed inland by the winds generated in the storm. A tropical storm or hurricane coming onshore near St. James will bring the prospect of flooding to a portion of St. James. The map below is a model that the National Weather Service showed at the recent Severe Storm Seminar. The model recreates the potential storm surge inundation from the category 4 hurricane Hazel that impacted North Carolina in 1954.



The National Weather Service describes storm surge as “often the greatest threat to life and property from a tropical cyclone, and it doesn’t always occur at the same times or locations as a storm’s hazardous winds. In addition, while in most cases coastal residents can remain in their homes (or in a secure structure nearby) and be safe from a tropical cyclone’s winds, evacuations are generally needed to keep people safe from storm surge.”

## **What does the Town of St. James do to notify its' residents of potential or imminent storm events?**

The Town of St. James has in place an Emergency Management Work Group which advises and coordinates with the Town Council the planning for, mitigation of, response to, and recovery after incidents potentially affecting the Town of St. James and its residents. This team of fifteen volunteers is headed up by our Town Manager and Director of Emergency Management, Jeff Repp, and SJEM Deputy Director, Diana Kelly.

In the case of a declared state of emergency, the SJEM team activates the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) located at the fire station on Oceanic Drive. During an event, the SJEM team gathers and analyzes information from several sources in order to provide accurate, timely, and up-to-date information. The information is provided to the TOSJ leadership and our residents, before, during, and after an event. This information allows residents to make informed decisions regarding their life safety, and property preservation.

## **What should I do now?**

- If you do not have a plan on what to do in a severe weather event, start your plan now.
- The Town of St. James website's Emergency Management section provides valuable information to help you plan for and respond to an event.
  - Go to <https://www.townofstjamesnc.org/departments/emergencymanagement>
  - Click on Resources for detailed information on what to do before, during, and after an event.
  - You will also find information from Homeland Security, The State of North Carolina, and Brunswick County.
  - The Severe Storm Seminar presentation, held on June 10<sup>th</sup>, was video-taped and is available on the Town of St. James website.
- Ensure that you are part of the Town of St. James Emergency Notification System. The contact information that you provide the POA is used by the Town of St. James to deliver emergency notifications and updates. Communication formats include email, text and voice messages. Keep your POA contact information up to date.

***"When the time to perform is present, the time to prepare has passed."***