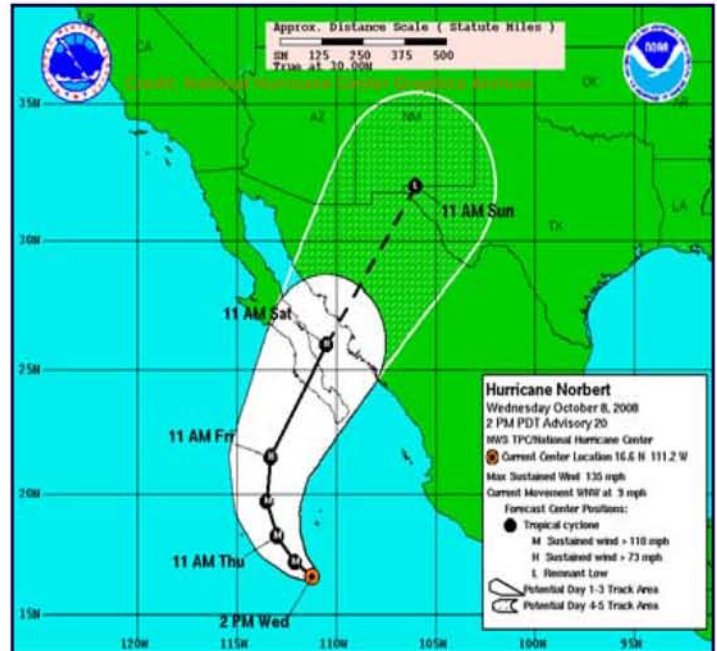
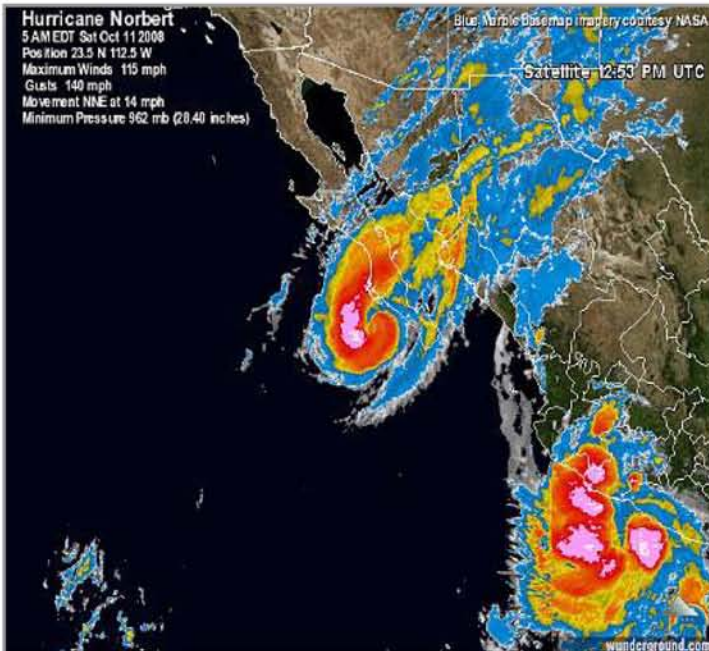


Are We Vulnerable to Hurricanes Here?



Hurricane Norbert Makes Landfall in the Southern Baja October, 2008

Hurricane Norbert struck Mexico's Baja California peninsula on Saturday October 11th of 2008 with torrential rains and winds of up to 135 mph (Category 4). Strong winds bent palm trees along coastal areas. Some streets were in knee-deep water in the town of Puerto San Carlos. Norbert was ripping off roofs, knocking down trees and left one person missing and more than 20,000 homes without electricity, local authorities say. Some 2,850 people were housed in temporary shelters. Forty percent of homes were destroyed or damaged on the islands of Margarita and Magdalena, mainly having lost their roofs, said a report from state protection services. La Paz international airport suspended its activities at midday local time Saturday, but the tourist resort of Los Cabos remained cautiously open.

Norbert was the strongest hurricane to affect the western side of the Baja Peninsula. Norbert was also the strongest October hurricane since 2002's Kenna, with 140 mph winds.

Norbert Now a Powerful Hurricane, Headed to Baja October 9, 2008

Seeing such a large and well-defined eye on the false-colored satellite image of Hurricane Norbert is enough to send shivers down your spine. That's an indication of a well-developed and very powerful storm, and that's what Hurricane Norbert is on Thursday, October 9, 2008.

Late Wednesday, at 11:00 p.m. EDT, Norbert reached category four hurricane status on the Saffir-Simpson scale, when its sustained winds were measured at 135 mph. By 5:00 a.m. EDT on Oct. 10, Hurricane Norbert's winds decreased a little to 125 mph making it a dangerous category three hurricane. However, the National Hurricane Center warns that storms of this power fluctuate in intensity.

At 5 a.m. Oct. 10, Norbert was moving northwestward near 7 mph in the open waters of the eastern Pacific Ocean. Norbert was about 410 miles south-southwest of the southern tip of Baja California. That's near latitude 17.5 degrees north and longitude 112.5 degrees west. Minimum central pressure was 954 millibars.

Norbert is a bigger storm than last week's Tropical Storm Marco that made landfall in east central Mexico. Norbert's tropical storm force winds extend up to 140 miles from its center.

credit: www.nasa.gov