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TIDES Aug./Sept. 2011 Eastern Standard Time					
High	Low				
A.M.	P.M.	A.M.	P.M.		
31	10:13	10:30	3:46	4:13	
1	11:03	11:21	4:33	5:08	
2	11:57		5:22	6:07	
3	12:17	12:56	6:16	7:10	
4	1:19	2:01	7:16	8:17	
5	2:29	3:09	8:22	9:26	
6	3:43	4:17	9:30	10:31	
7	4:51	5:18	10:35	11:29	

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First Quarter, Sept. 6  
Full Moon, Sept. 13  
Last Quarter, Sept. 21  
New Moon, Sept. 28  
Perigee, Sept. 2, 30  
Apogee, Sept. 18

## CMC Animal shelter was prepared for hurricane

By CAIN CHAMBERLIN  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY COURT HOUSE – The Cape May County Animal Shelter and Adoption Center prepared for the worst during Hurricane Irene, according to Center Director Judith Davies. She said on Friday, the staff made sure all the cages were at least a foot and a half off the floor and away from windows.

Davies said the rest of the staff left before the storm on Saturday, but she and another staff member stayed behind for the weekend to take care of the 46 dogs and 200 cats that were there at the time. She said the power

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## Hurricane Irene passes by Cape May County

By CHRISTOPHER SOUTH  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY COUNTY – County officials described Hurricane Irene as having “passed by Cape May County,” after the Category 1 hurricane weakened and was far less destructive than expected.

County Communications Director Lenora Boninfante said Hurricane Irene ran parallel to Cape May County Sunday morning, coming as close as approximately 10 miles off shore.

Although weakened, the hurricane caused concern for barrier island flooding, especially because high tide had not been reached prior to the

Cape May County residents without electricity. By Tuesday morning, that number was down to 2,653.

As the state resumed collecting tolls on the roadways at 6 a.m. Monday, Cape May County reinstated tolls on bridges at the same time.

All county employees were asked to return to work Monday, and the county park and zoo remained closed Monday while debris was being cleaned up.

“Like with everything else, we started the process early. Emergency Management monitored the storm since Monday (Aug. 22), all municipalities have plans and followed them, and the zoo is the same,” she said.

*‘When we look at the process it was seamless. There were no major problems reported as people were evacuating. If you look at this, it is the busy time of the year for us and would be the worst time this could happen.’*

–Lenora Boninfante,  
CMC Communications Director

storm. The county issued a flash flood and hurricane warning.

Boninfante announced that as of 4:55 p.m. on Saturday, 95 percent of the county had been evacuated, either by leaving themselves, or with the help of municipal and county resources.

After the storm passed, the county began a complete assessment of damages, and public works crews began removing debris from the 210 miles of county roads and bridges.

According to Atlantic City Electric reports, as many as 140,000 customers had lost power during the storm. As of Sunday, Aug. 28, at 4:15 p.m. there were still around 26,000

Boninfante said the zoo employees secured the animals on Thursday, bringing them all inside. On Monday, she said cleaning, mainly tree limbs, had begun and continued throughout the day. The zoo covers 85 acres and the park is about 200 acres.

“We had a lot of downed branches,” Boninfante said.

The county was also working on the return of residents to county nursing homes. The county evacuated 160 residents from the Crest Haven Nursing Home and Rehabilitation Center, including their caregivers, starting at 6 a.m. Friday, Aug. 26.

“They left to predetermined

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Christopher South/Cape May Star and Wave

Above, workers board up antique windows at the former church located at Lafayette and Franklin in preparation for Hurricane Irene. Below, a photo by Jeff Gernitis, owner of the Peter Shields Inn on Beach Avenue, shows how angry the sea can become. See more photos inside and page A10.



## County prepared for a worst case scenario – and got it

By CHRISTOPHER SOUTH  
Cape May Star and Wave

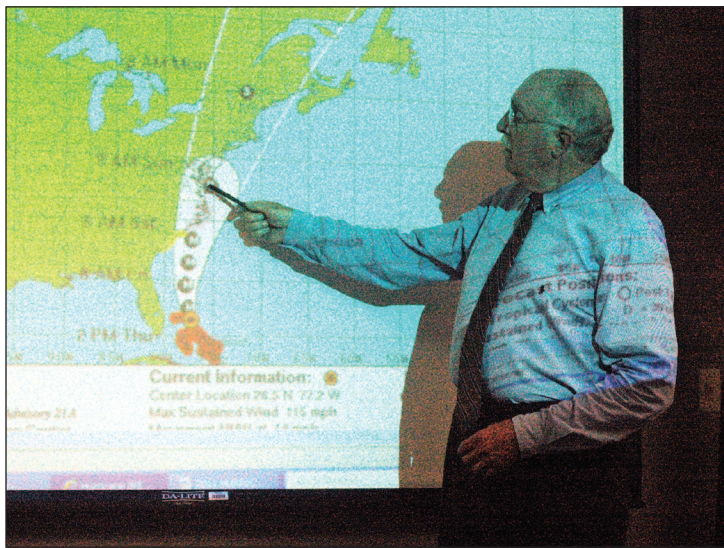
CAPE MAY COURT HOUSE – At last Thursday’s press briefing, Cape May County Emergency Management Communications Center (CMCEMCC) Director Frank McCall was asked if Hurricane Irene was a worst case scenario.

McCall thought half a moment and said, “Yes.”

On Thursday, Aug. 25, at 2 p.m., Cape May County Emergency Management officials issued a proclamation for evacuation effective immediately for barrier islands, 8 a.m. Friday for all Cape May County, with the proclamation to run through Monday, Aug. 29, if necessary.

McCall and other county officials briefed municipal officials at 1 p.m., an hour before the proclamation was to go into effect. McCall said there was an understanding among all 16 municipalities in Cape May County that they would fall under the umbrella of the county’s proclamation. At the time, state and county officials were bracing for the worst – a landfall hurricane coming on a late summer weekend.

“It’s looking like the hurricane is coming very, very close if not a landfall hurri-



Christopher South/Cape May Star and Wave

Cape May County Emergency Management Communications Center Director Frank McCall indicates the forecasted path of Hurricane Irene at a press conference, Aug. 25, when county officials announced mandatory evacuation of the entire county.

cane,” McCall said.

According to McCall, there was about a 90 percent certainty Hurricane Irene would make landfall in New Jersey, and was making preparations for that event.

“All Cape May County, in some shape or form, will be affected by this hurricane,” he said.

“We have a united effort in Cape May County, and will be implementing efforts to ensure all residents and visi-

tors are safe. Protecting life is our first priority,” McCall said.

McCall indicated the county had been in touch with the Office of Homeland Security Preservation and the New Jersey State Police Office of Emergency Management, passing along all requests for assistance.

McCall said the county has practiced for this type of emergency, and as recently as July 27-28, there was a

hurricane evacuation exercise involving all municipalities, most county departments, 13 federal agencies and 23 state departments. McCall said the first task was to urge residents and visitors to evacuate.

“Eighty percent of the people who live in Cape May County live in the coastal areas. Between year around residents, visitors, foreign workers, and people staying at boat slips, the county estimates it needs to evacuate 750,000 to 850,000 people,” he said.

The county later reported, by Saturday, it had managed to evacuate all but 12,000 of the estimated 750,000 people in the county.

McCall said Emergency Management officials anticipated extensive flooding from the storm. He said there would be a new moon on Sunday, known as an astronomical high tide, where the high tide is six feet above normal. He said it was anticipated the tide would be three to four feet above normal, which means there could be a new record.

In addition, the county expected anywhere from 8 to 16 inches of rainfall.

Atlantic City Electric advised the county there would be electrical outages for a period of time. A release said Multi-Day recovery

process. This was based partly on predictions of sustained 70 mph winds for a 24-hour period.

McCall said the last time there was a weather event such as this was in 1985 – Hurricane Gloria, but expectations were Hurricane Irene would be worse.

“We’re taking this very serious,” McCall said. “People say they’ve gone through this before. No one living now in Cape May County has survived a direct hit hurricane.”

McCall fielded a number of questions referring to people refusing to leave the county, and responded to several questions saying, “All of Cape May County is under a mandatory evacuation order.”

Pressed to respond to questions asking what would happen to the people who chose to ignore the order, McCall said, “We understand people will balk. Without being sarcastic, we are asking those who insist on staying to get a 3x5 card, and write in indelible ink, their name, Social Security number, next of kin and their phone number, stick it in your left shoe.”

Asked where people were to go, McCall recommended they evacuate at least as far as Cumberland County, but to stay away from the Delaware

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