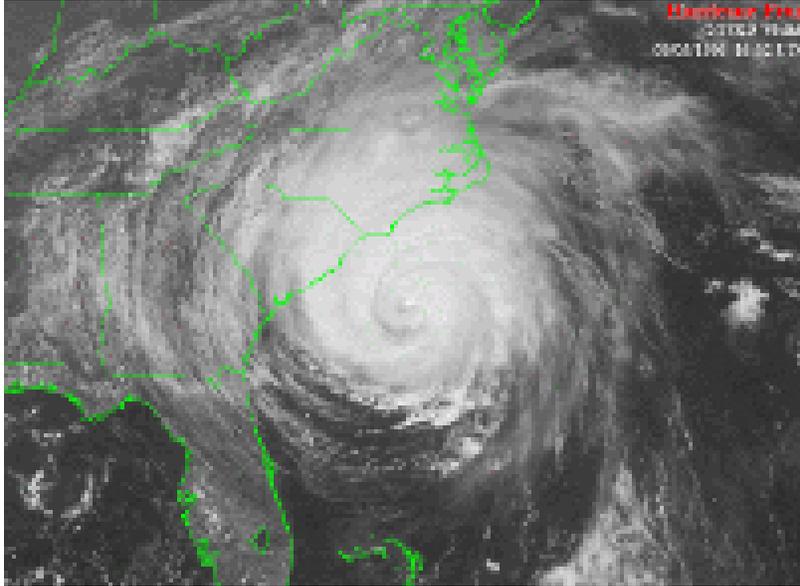


# North Carolina Hit By Fran-tastic Storm!



---

## Introduction

Hurricane Fran slammed into North Carolina's southern coast on September 5th, 1996 with sustained winds of approximately 115 MPH, and gusts as high as 125 MPH. At some point, 1.7 million customers in North Carolina and 400,000 customers in Virginia lost electricity. The overall death toll was 37, including 24 in North Carolina. Flooding was also a severe problem in North Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, and Maryland. Fran produced rainfall amounts of over 10 inches in parts of eastern North Carolina and western Virginia.

Damages for homes and businesses in North Carolina (NC) were estimated at approximately \$2.3 billion. Damages/costs related to public property (debris removal, roads and bridges, public buildings, utilities, etc) were estimated at about \$1.1 billion for NC. Agricultural damage (crops, livestock, buildings) in NC was over \$700 million. Wake County (Raleigh and vicinity) alone reported over \$900 million in damage to residential and commercial property. Finally, forestry/timber losses for the state probably exceeded \$1 billion.

Taken collectively, total damages/costs for NC are estimated at approximately \$5 billion. With the addition of lesser damages for states to the north, the storm's total cost was well in excess of \$5 billion, making Fran the third most costly hurricane in U.S. history, moving Opal (1995) into fourth place. However, it's important to note that the figures for

earlier storms are not adjusted for inflation (see below for a web site with inflation-adjusted figures).

Just prior to landfall of Fran, a small portion of western North Carolina-- in the Bat Cave, Chimney Rock, Lake Lure areas--received up to 11 inches of rain in a 3 hour period. The rains were the result of nearly stationary, very heavy thunderstorms associated with an upper level low pressure system. Severe damage to property in the immediate area resulted, with about 70 homes/businesses destroyed or significantly damaged.

A final interesting side-note: Oh no, not again!!!...Last year, Hurricanes Erin and Opal struck the same areas of the Florida panhandle, providing a one-two punch to the residents. This year, Hurricanes Bertha and Fran did the same for North Carolina.

---

## Satellite Images

### August 28

[Hurricane Edouard + TS Fran IR \(Aug 28\)](#)

[Hurricane Edouard + TS Fran Visible \(Aug 28\)](#)

### August 29

[Hurricane Edouard + Fran + Gustav IR \(Aug 29\)](#)

[Hurricane Edouard + Fran + Gustav Visible \(Aug 29\)](#)

### August 30

[Hurricanes Edouard & Fran IR1 Movie \(Aug 30, AVI\)](#)

[Hurricanes Edouard & Fran IR1 Movie \(Aug 30, MPEG\)](#)

[Hurricanes Edouard & Fran IR2 Movie \(Aug 30, AVI\)](#)

[Hurricanes Edouard & Fran IR2 Movie \(Aug 30, MPEG\)](#)

### September 03

[Hurricane Fran Visible \(Sep 03\)](#)

[Hurricane Fran Visible Rapid Scan \(Sep 03\)](#)

### September 04

[Hurricane Fran IR \(Sep 04\)](#)

[Hurricane Fran Visible 1km \(Sep 04\)](#)

[Hurricane Fran Visible 2km \(Sep 04\)](#)

[Hurricane Fran Visible U.S. \(Sep 04\)](#)

[Hurricane Fran Water Vapor \(Sep 04\)](#)  
[Hurricane Fran POES Visible](#)

## **September 05**

[Hurricane Fran IR \(Sep 05\)](#)  
[Hurricane Fran Visible 1 \(Sep 05\)](#)  
[Hurricane Fran Visible 2 \(Sep 05\)](#)  
[Hurricane Fran IR at Landfall](#)

## **September 06**

[Hurricane Fran IR Movie--Sep 05-06 \(AVI\)](#)

---

## **Links to News and Other Information**

- [Hurricane Bertha Info and Images](#)

Citing this Article

Lott, Neal, "North Carolina Hit By Fran-tastic Storm!", 1996, NOAA's National Climatic Data Center, Asheville, NC