

## SNL Blogs



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# Rare mammoth storm leaves imprint on entire eastern US

By [Adam Cancryn](#)

The remnants of a storm that [crippled](#) parts of the East Coast on Oct. 29 continued their trek inland over the next day, bringing high winds and precipitation as far south as Tennessee and as far north as Canada.

The weather system lost most of the ferocity it displayed when it flooded segments of New York City and New Jersey and generated widespread damage but still managed to leave another large impression. Blizzards dumped up to 2 feet of snow on parts of West Virginia and Maryland, while heavy rain and high winds battered the northern U.S. and reportedly knocked out power for more than 100,000 Canadians.

After moving westward for much of Oct. 30, the storm is expected to turn north toward western New York and make for the border, bringing up to 5 inches of rain with it. That could lead to some significant losses, but nothing rivaling those already experienced along the coast.

"Ninety percent of the damage and power outages are already accounted for," Weather 2000 Inc. Chief Meteorologist Michael Schlacter told SNL. "But there's probably another 10% that we will tack on there from these inland areas."

That means that the process of estimating insured losses could take a bit longer than normal. Catastrophe risk modeling firms generally take into account a storm's entire life span when calculating its impact, and while some firms have released initial projections, there will likely be little agreement on a narrow range of losses until the storm is comprehensively assessed.

AIR Worldwide told SNL that it is putting together an early loss estimate, but it is busy tracking the storm's damage. EQECAT Atmospheric Scientist Annes Haseemkunju told SNL that the company plans to update its estimates between 8 p.m. ET and 8:30 p.m. ET on Oct. 30. It previously [projected](#) insured losses of \$5 billion to \$10 billion connected to the storm.

Although the mass flooding and destruction of parts of the heavily populated mid-Atlantic ranked among the worst storm damage the region has seen in recent history, Schlacter said the advisories issued by the National Weather Service in previous days were "spot on." The organization accurately predicted the magnitude of the storm surge that hit Long Island and New York City and the one that inundated southern New Jersey.

"The surprise was from people seeing the numbers on their computer screen or reported and then seeing it with their own eyes," he said. "It's one thing to say, 'Up to a 15-foot storm surge.' It's another thing to see a neighborhood in Battery Park City [N.Y.] covered in water."

He added that the legacy of Hurricane Sandy and the extratropical storm that it morphed into would be that surge, rather than the rain and wind. The precipitation accounted for little of the flooding relative to the storm surge, and sustained wind speeds never reached hurricane force, perhaps sparing the insurance industry from additional damage.

As the storm pushes north into Canada, much of the attention will now center on the extensive damage along the East Coast. But the precise [combination](#) of meteorological elements that came together over the past few days created a storm of rare power and size whose effects will be felt throughout the entirety of the eastern U.S.

"It's the incredible diversity of weather, from the ocean storm surge to the strong winds to Appalachian snows rivaling 2 feet," Schlacter said. "We have summer, fall and winter weather all at the same time on a very grand scale."