

Idalia downs 2 trees, but had little other impact

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Hurricane Idalia threatened heavy rain, thunderstorms, possible flooding and fear of power outages across Lancaster County.

But the county fared well against the storm with little to no damage, said Darren Player, director of Lancaster County Fire Rescue and emergency operations.

“I think we had a couple trees, one went down, down toward Kershaw, somewhere around midnight. I don’t think it blocked an entire road,” Player said. “Thursday morning, around 5:15 a.m. there was (a tree) reported down on U.S. 97 near Cunningham Quarter (Road).”

Player also said there was no reported storm-related damage to any household in the county. He also said while there is no ongoing threat to the county or state related to Idalia, hurricane season is just getting started.

“We’re right dead in the heart of it,” Player said. “It goes all the way to the first of November. August, September (and) the first week of October are the highest time, but the month of September is the peak.”

Lancaster County School District prepared for expected bad weather by making Thursday an at-home e-learning day.

“I’m here today (Thursday) looking outside, and it is a beautiful day, and we called off regular school today with e-learning because of the possibility of bad weather,” said Superintendent Dr. Jonathan Phipps. “I felt some grief for that, but that’s a prime example that we err on the side of caution, before we put any child in danger.”

Player said the biggest concern when it comes to storms is not the actual storm itself, but the flooding during and after.

“Everybody always needs to look out for flooding,” he said. “More people die from flooding, and they typically are in their vehicle when they die in the flooding. And once you’re in that, there’s no hope for you. We are not going to be able to get to you fast enough to rescue you in that kind of situation.”

Player said Lancaster Fire Rescue teams prepared for the worst by bringing their work trucks home with them, to be prepared for sudden water rescues.

“Fire Rescue does pretty much everything — search and rescue, hang a rope, water rescues, swift water rescue,” Player said. “They’ve got a lot of that equipment, particularly water rescue, their dry suits, wet suits with them in the truck, so that they’re able to quickly deploy if we’ve got a water incident.”

There are five teams of two Fire Rescue members each, and the county just voted to add one more team.

Child images

LANNWS-09-02-23 HURRICANE UPDATE Darren Player

