

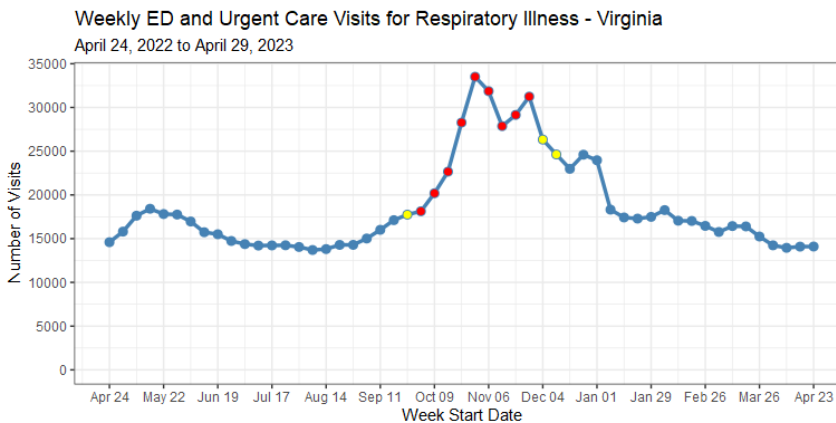
May 5, 2023

Key Takeaways

- As with last week, all Virginian counties and cities are at low COVID-19 community levels. All regions are at minimal influenza levels. Statewide influenza levels are also at minimal.
- The CSU Tropical Weather Center anticipates a slightly below-average Atlantic hurricane season, but with a near-average probability of a major hurricane making landfall in the coastal US or Caribbean.
- Virginia Beach declared a local emergency after severe storms, including an EF-3 tornado, caused over \$15 million in damage Sunday evening.
- The COVID-19 public health emergency declaration will end on May 11. When it does, the CDC will stop reporting COVID-19 Community Levels. The CDC is determining how to address healthcare guidance without use of Community Levels. It will however, continue to collect county-level COVID-19 hospitalization data for the foreseeable future.

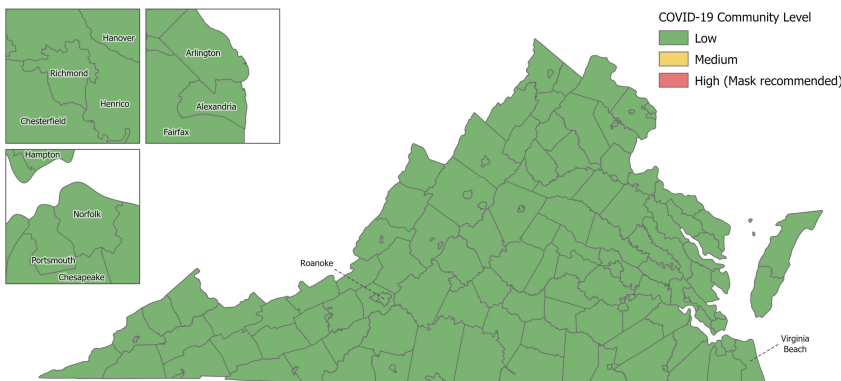
Key Figures

Respiratory Disease Activity



CDC COVID-19 Community Levels

As of May 4, 2023



Source: [CDC COVID Data Tracker](#)

COVID-19

30%

Chance that the WHO will identify a new COVID-19 Variant of Concern in 2023. (Metaculus forecast)

113

New COVID-19 hospital admissions in Virginia for the week ending April 29.

Mpox

0

The total number of mpox cases reported in the US during the week-ending April 26, the first week without new cases since last May.

Disaster Events

6.2

The average number of billion-dollar disaster events in Virginia has experienced annually over the past 5 years.

42

The number of homes destroyed or rendered uninhabitable after a tornado struck Virginia Beach Sunday evening.

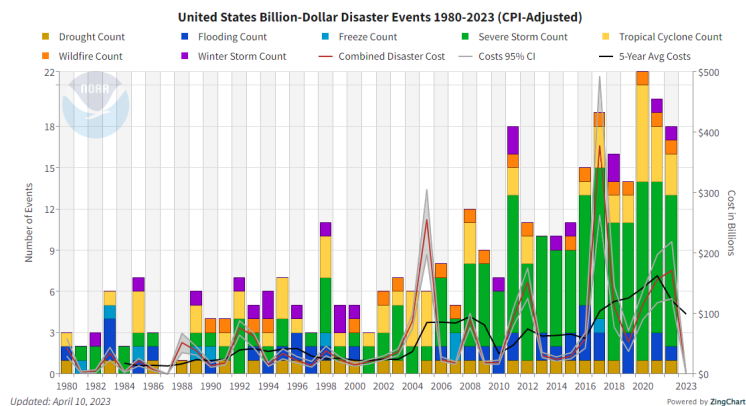
Spotlight: Hurricane Preparedness Week

Forecasts are italicized

Spotlight

- **The CSU Tropical Weather & Climate Research Center projects a slightly below-average Atlantic hurricane season.** The center projects 13 named storms, including 6 hurricanes. The 1991-2020 average is 14.4 named storms and 7.2 hurricanes. However, there is larger-than-normal uncertainty associated with this forecast, with a near-average probability for major hurricanes making landfall in the continental US or Caribbean.
- **The number of CPI-adjusted billion-dollar disaster events has been elevated in Virginia.** Virginia experienced an average of 4.7 events annually from 2013-2022, compared to 1.7 events in 1993-2002. Over the past 5 years, Virginia has averaged 6.2 events. Severe storms have accounted for most of the increase, but winter storms, tropical cyclones, and floods have also been a factor.
- **Hampton Roads & Eastern Shore are subsiding (slowly sinking), increasing vulnerability to sea level rise.** In addition to experiencing the highest rates of sea level rise on the East Coast, the area is also subsiding at the fastest rate, due mostly to natural geological shifts. Many areas are sinking at up to 6 mm a year. When combined with 3.3mm of annual sea level rise, some areas are sinking at 9mm per year. One inch is about 25 mm, so some areas are losing an inch every 2-3 years.

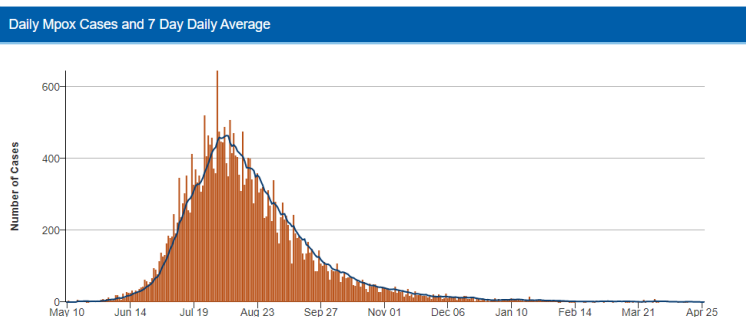
Hurricane Preparedness Week



Like Virginia, the United States has seen a steady increase in the number of billion-dollar disaster events (CPI-adjusted) over the past couple of decades. Severe storms are driving most of the increase, but tropical cyclones are also a factor. Image Source: NOAA NCEI.

Other News

- **The FDA approved the first-ever vaccine for RSV.** The vaccine was approved for adults 60 and over. The CDC must recommend the vaccine before it can be distributed. The CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices meets June 21 and 22, and will likely consider the vaccine then.
- **The CDC will stop tracking COVID-19 Community Levels when the Public Health Emergency ends on May 11.** Requirements to report some of the data supporting the metric will end, precipitating the change. Instead, the CDC will focus more on hospitalizations, while shifting to wastewater and other measures for early warnings.
- **COVID-19 may come in continuous "wavelets" rather than seasonal surges.** Experts interviewed for an article in Nature noted that new variants are causing relatively mild surges three or four times a year in some countries. Despite becoming milder, COVID-19 deaths remain much higher than flu deaths.
- **Virginia Beach declared a local emergency after severe storms, including an EF-3 tornado, destroyed 6 homes, rendered 36 uninhabitable, and caused over \$15 million in damage on Sunday evening. Three schools were closed Monday but reopened on Tuesday.**



The US experienced its first full week without a new reported mpox case since May 2022. Zero mpox cases were reported for the week ending April 26, 2023. Virginia's last reported mpox case was in early February. Image Source: CDC.