

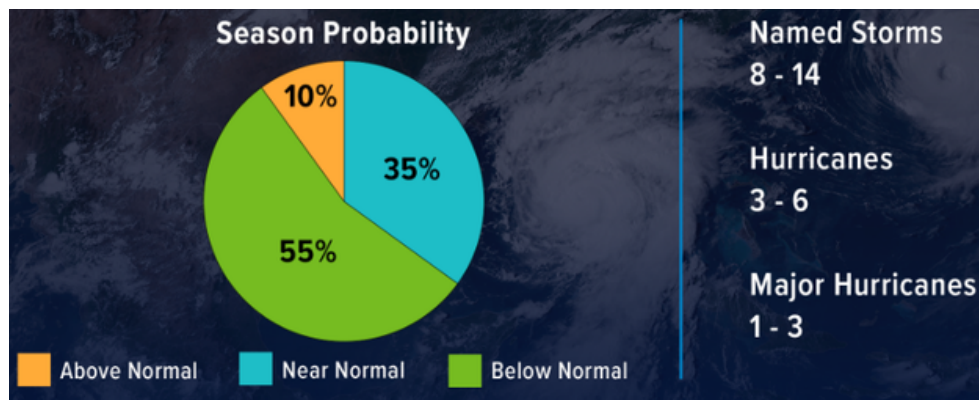
May 22, 2026

Key Takeaways

- The WHO declared a Public Health Emergency of International Concern due to the Ebola outbreak in the DRC.
- Virginia reported 5 additional measles cases this week, all in Central region, bringing the 2026 total to 40.
- NOAA forecasts a below-normal 2026 Atlantic hurricane season. However, it only takes one storm to have a major impact on your organization and community.

Key Figures

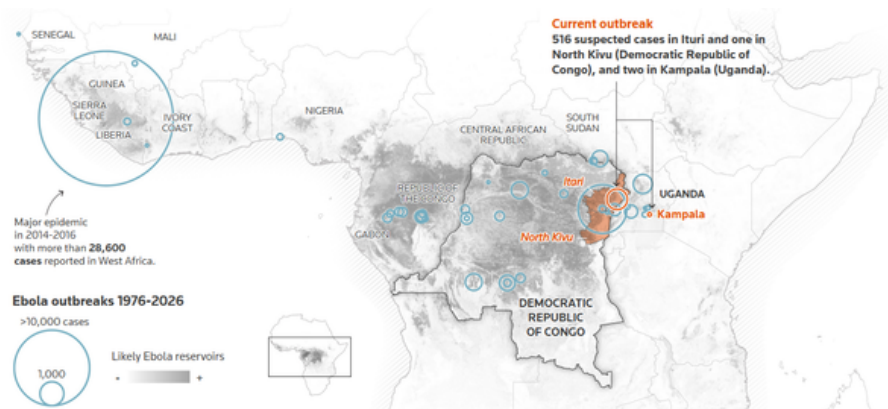
NOAA 2026 Atlantic Hurricane Season Outlook



NOAA forecasts a below-normal hurricane season, with 8 to 14 named storms, including 3 to 6 hurricanes, with 1 to 3 expected to develop into major hurricanes. NOAA notes there is still a 35% chance of a near normal season, and a 10% chance of an above normal season.

Image Source: [NOAA](#)

Past and Current Ebola Outbreaks



The Ebola outbreak centered in the Ituri province of the DRC is already the 3rd largest on record, though previous outbreaks centered in Sierra Leone and North Kivu DRC (which neighbors Ituri) were much larger. Image Source: [Reuters](#)

Measles

59

Measles cases confirmed nationally in the week ending May 21.

5

New measles cases confirmed in Virginia in the past week.

Key Dates

May 25

Annual Hajj and Umrah pilgrimages begin.

June 1

The Atlantic Hurricane Season begins.

June 11

The FIFA World Cup begins.

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Ongoing Monitored Situations

Ebola

- The Africa CDC announced an **Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo last week**. As of May 21, the US CDC reported 575 suspected cases, 51 confirmed, and 148 suspected deaths. 2 confirmed cases and 1 death were reported in Uganda, both linked to travel in DRC. The virus may have been spreading for weeks before detection.
- The WHO declared the outbreak a **Public Health Emergency of International Concern**, noting that current data suggests a larger and growing outbreak, and a complex local context that supports further spread. WHO's director-general did not convene WHO's emergency committee before making the declaration, a rare step, citing 'the scale and speed of the epidemic'.
- The outbreak is caused by the rare **Bundibugyo virus (BVD)**. Currently, there is no approved vaccine for BVD. Though some candidates are in development, clinical trials are likely months away.
- The WHO is currently **prioritizing surveillance, quarantine, contact-tracing and safe burials** to contain the outbreak. The WHO is sending a support team, and the DRC is opening treatment centers in the area. Residents attacked one treatment center after officials prevented retrieval of a body there, setting it on fire.
- The **risk to American travelers and the public is low** according to the CDC, while VDH rates the risk as very low. There have been no cases or contacts reported in the US.
- The US has instituted **Title 42 restrictions on travel from the region**. The measures enhance travel monitoring for people arriving from the region and restrict entry for non-US passport holders from DRC, Uganda and South Sudan. US passport holders will be routed through Dulles International Airport.
- A **US doctor who contracted the disease while treating patients**, along with six other high-risk US citizens were transported to Germany and the Czech Republic for treatment and monitoring. Additionally, a Detroit-bound plane was diverted to Canada when a passenger from DRC was permitted to board in error.

Seasonal Illness

- In Virginia, overall respiratory activity is **minimal and stable**, accounting for 10.3% of ED visits. Flu, COVID-19 and RSV activity are all low and stable.
- **Gastrointestinal illness is at or below threshold in Virginia**, accounting for 10.4% of ED visits, down from 10.5% last week. GI illness is above threshold in Central and Northwest Virginia.

Measles

- The CDC reported **59 new measles cases in the US over the past week**, bringing the 2026 total to 1,952 cases across 38 US states and Washington, DC. Canada reported 29 new cases last week. Mexico's report is delayed this week.
- Virginia reported **5 additional measles cases this week**, all in the Central region. These cases follow the announcement of a measles outbreak in Buckingham county last week. VDH also launched a new dashboard with more detailed information on measles in the Commonwealth.
- Utah added **26 new cases last week** and Pennsylvania added **8**. Outside of those two states and Virginia, no state added more than 4.

Other Monitored Situations

- New research suggests **asymptomatic mpox may drive 33 to 44% of spread**. Using specimens from routine STI tests from MSM in Los Angeles, researchers estimate just 1 in 33 infections is diagnosed.
- A CDC survey suggests **just 32% of US backyard flock owners know the signs and symptoms of avian influenza**. However, 94% had heard of the disease and 71% knew they could be infected by their flocks. Nevertheless, 57% indicated they would contact a veterinarian or local officials if birds exhibited related symptoms.

Other News

Maternal Emergency Preparedness Dashboard



VDH released a new dashboard mapping the number of pregnancies, maternal vulnerability, and major disaster declarations by county. Image source: [VDH](#)

- **Three people died and 18 first responders were hospitalized due to a substance exposure in New Mexico.** Medical personnel responding to a suspected drug overdose began to experience multiple symptoms. The cause remains under investigation but authorities believe it was spread by contact and there is no threat to the public.

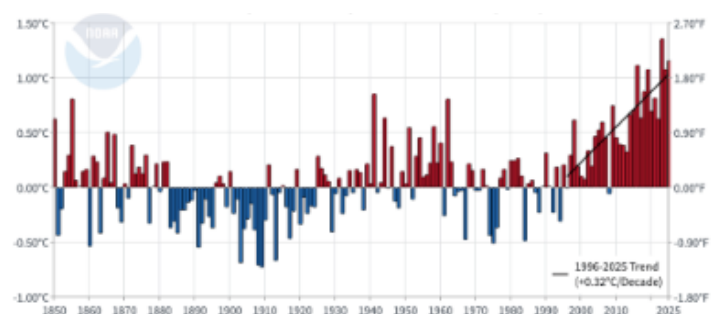
- **The Virginia Dept of Environmental Quality expanded its drought warning to 127 Virginia localities.** The remaining 6 localities are under a drought watch. Groundwater levels are low in much of the state. Indicator wells in 12 of 13 drought regions are below 10th percentile, while 16 of 24 statewide are below 5th percentile.
- **A shooting at a San Francisco mosque resulted in 5 deaths** in an incident being investigated as a hate crime. 3 were killed distracting or delaying the 2 shooters, who died from self-inflicted gunshot wounds. The three victims were credited with preventing a worse outcome.
- **Canada confirmed a hantavirus case from a passenger on the MV Hondius**, bringing the total cases associated with the outbreak to 11. A traveling partner tested negative and risk to the general population in Canada remains low.

Spotlight

- **NOAA expects a below-normal 2026 Atlantic hurricane season.** However, there is still a 45% chance of a near- or above-normal season according to their forecast. NOAA is 70% confident in its forecast. NOAA's forecast largely mirrors the forecast from [Colorado State University](#), though CSU expects named storms and hurricanes to be in the high end of NOAA's ranges.
- **NOAA forecasts an 82% chance that El Niño will emerge by July**, with near certainty (96%) that it will continue through winter. A strong or very strong El Niño is more likely than not, but not until August or September. Among other impacts, El Niño conditions tend to suppress tropical cyclone development in the Atlantic, and steer those that do develop out to sea.
- **Warming oceans increase the risks from tropical cyclones.** Researchers estimate that warming oceans increased hurricane maximum potential intensity by 8.6 mph between 1972 and 2017. Warmer seas also contribute to rapid intensification and increased rainfall from hurricanes and tropical cyclones.

Atlantic Hurricane Season

Gulf of Mexico Temperature Anomalies



While NOAA is forecasting a below-normal 2026 Atlantic hurricane season, the threat from storms that do occur remains high. Warm sea temperatures in the Gulf of Mexico fueled Hurricane Helene, and may continue to fuel storms moving through the Gulf this year. Image Source: [YCC](#)