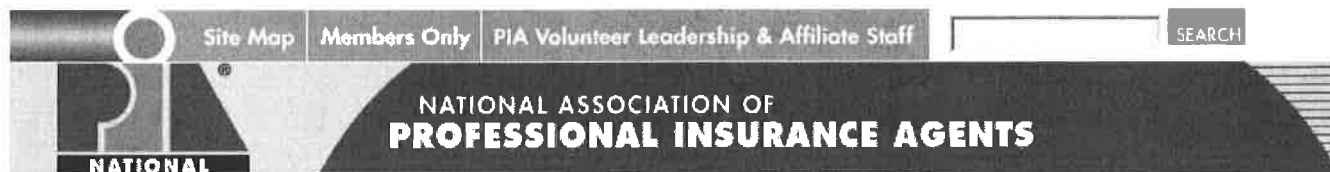


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Predictions for 2006 Hurricane Season Sound Ominous

With the hurricane season about to start on June 1, forecasters are out with their predictions – and they don't sound good.

Colorado State University's chief hurricane guru William Gray is predicting another very active hurricane season in 2006 -- 17 named tropical storms, nine hurricanes and five intense hurricanes, or storms ranging from Category 3 to Category 5. In all categories, that's about double the average. That's far fewer than 2005, which saw 28 named storms and 15 hurricanes, seven of which were Category 3 or higher. But it's still above average. What is especially troubling are the strike probabilities of those 17 named storms.

Gray says the probability of at least one intense hurricane making landfall during hurricane season, which begins June 1 and ends Nov. 30, is 81 percent for the entire U.S. coastline. The average is 52 percent.

The probability of a major strike on the eastern U.S. coast, including the Florida peninsula, is 64 percent, while the average is 31 percent. And the Gulf Coast, from the Florida panhandle to Brownsville, Texas, has a 47 percent chance of seeing a major hurricane make landfall, well above the average 30 percent chance.

What It Means to Agents: The bottom line is the probabilities of something bad happening in 2006 are running about double the average, across the board.

Forecaster [Bill Gray's Hurricane Forecast](#) (WFOR Channel 4 Miami 4/4/06)

May 9, 2006

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