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Where Would the Oil Go if a Katrina-like Storm Hit?

There's been questions about what would happen if a hurricane was to make landfall and in that process bring the oil with it. Two FSU researchers took on that challenge and show us what would happen if another Katrina-like storm should hit.

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Where Would the Oil Go if a Katrina-like Storm Hit?

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"Katrina entered the Gulf of Mexico, it actually crossed South Florida and turned northward and impacted New Orleans."

Two FSU researchers wanted to see what impact the coastline could face if a storm like Katrina hit at this very moment.

The only difference now, is the vast oil slick that stands in it's path.

"And very strong winds pushes the oil on land."

"It was pretty shocking to see the potential devastation this could cause to the coastal regions, particularly West of Florida and the Louisiana and Mississippi area," says FSU COAPS Researcher Steve Morey, Ph.D.

A floor below the COAPS Department lies FSU's Supercomputers, a room full of high performing processors, equivalent to nearly 2700 computers.

It's here where thousands of these computations are done in fractions of the time it would take researchers to do them.

"We can see how far the oil can go onland."

And based on this model, that answer is several miles.

But as we all know, each hurricane is unique and that means an opportunity for optimism.

Optimism, that none of the named storms predicted this active hurricane season, will be of the same magnitude as the deadly Katrina storm.

"In some scenarios the hurricane could be good for the coast, might be where it will blow it away from the coast," says FSU COAPS researcher Dmitry Dukhovskoy, Ph.D.

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