

Izzy puts US in a tizzy 18 Sep 2003



Isabel about 400 miles south-south east of Cape Hatteras in North Carolina.

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Hurricane Isabel has made land-fall on the United States East Coast. Though downgraded to a Category 2 storm, Isabel was still whirling with 110 mph winds, making it more than powerful enough to do serious damage to anything it encounters.

Over 200,000 people in coastal areas along the two states and on islands in the Chesapeake Bay had been ordered to evacuate. Isabel is the most powerful hurricane to hit the area since Hurricane Floyd struck in 1999.

One of the greatest dangers could well be from flooding, especially in areas already saturated after a wet summer, according to experts. Flooding could also be caused by storm (tidal) surges heightened by

storm waves hitting low-lying coastal areas.

In anticipation of the storm, the US government has closed most of its offices in Washington DC and many train services and flights have been suspended including international flights from the UK. Most of the US Atlantic Fleet left ports on the East Coast to ride out the storm at sea.

The storm is expected to track north heading straight for Washington DC - the first hurricane since Floyd in 1999 to follow this path - and go on into New England.

