

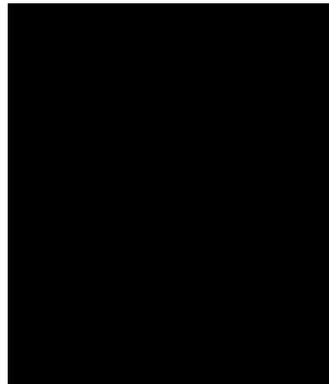
“Potentially Catastrophic” Damage Expected From Hurricane Patricia

October 23, 2015 3:21 PM By **Giovanna Maselli**

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MIAMI (CBSMiami) — As part of Mexico braces for Category 5 Hurricane Patricia, weather experts say the damage could be “potentially catastrophic.”



The hurricane is considered the strongest recorded in the Western hemisphere.



The most damage is expected along the coast with wind and storm surge, according to Florida International University (FIU) weather expert Erik Salna. Inland, he says, the hurricane is expected to cause flooding rains, mudslides and landslides.

The Mexican states expected to feel it the most are those places between Manzanillo which is to the South and Puerto Vallarta to the North.

Amid concerns over preps, the community has something else to worry about – building codes and land-use.

Salna says there are concerns over whether the building and lands are up to code considering “corruption undercuts attempts to do things right.”

This means, for those who have not been evacuated, shelter in a building may not be enough.

The Transparency International Score ranks Mexico in the bottom half of nations around the world, Salna says.

In 2014, their Corruption Perceptions Index Rank had Mexico at 103 out of 175. The higher the number the worse it is.

Casting further doubt on building standards, 42 percent of Mexicans think building without a license will result in no punishment, according to a joint survey between FIU- Vanderbilt and Latin American Public Opinion Project.

When it comes to having the right resources to weather the hurricane, Salna said one group will likely be lacking the proper protection needed.

“Unlikely for the poor; middle and upper income families tend to show greater resilience,” said Salna.

As for South Florida families wanting to get in contact with family members after the hurricane hits, Salna predicts it may be “unlikely for several days.”

Giovanna Maselli

Giovanna Maselli joined the CBS4 News team in March 2013 as an associate producer. There she learned the ins and outs of television news. She wrote day after day covering stories from breaking news to fun features. In the end she decided the we...

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