

## Tropical Storm Isaac threatens eastern Caribbean

Tropical Storm Isaac has formed in the central Atlantic, becoming the ninth named storm of the 2012 Atlantic hurricane season.

Air Force reconnaissance aircraft flew into the system Tuesday afternoon and found a small area of tropical-storm force winds associated with thunderstorms just outside the center of circulation. However, Isaac is not yet a well-organized system, with dry air and some northeasterly wind shear limiting Isaac's ability to rapidly organize. Isaac will be a system to watch closely over the next week or more in the northern Caribbean and the southeastern United States. The tropical storm is expected to gather strength and become a hurricane as early as Thursday morning. Steady strengthening is forecast through late week and the system could become a hurricane as early as Thursday in the eastern Caribbean. Initial impacts from this latest Atlantic system will be felt in the northeastern Caribbean islands Wednesday into Thursday. Tropical storm watches and warnings have been issued, including Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. Late week into the weekend, Isaac is forecast to pass near or just south of Hispaniola and in the general direction of eastern Cuba. Heavy rainfall, flooding and mudslides will be threats in all of the northern Caribbean islands regardless of how strong the system becomes.