

TS Isaac strengthening

A hurricane warning has been issued for the south coast of the Dominican Republic from Isla Saona westward to the Haiti-Dominican Republic border in advance of Tropical Storm Isaac.

As of 5 p.m., TS Isaac was just off the shores of the Leeward Islands with sustained winds of 45 mph. The storm is moving toward the west at 22 mph. 11Alive Chief Meteorologist Mike Francis says some strengthening of Isaac is expected, and forecasters at the National Hurricane Center said Isaac could become a hurricane Thursday night or Friday.

The center of Isaac is expected to move through the Leeward Islands early this evening, pass near or to the south of the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico on Thursday, and approach the Dominican Republic Thursday night or Friday.

On its currently projected path, Isaac is forecast to begin moving across eastern Cuba late Friday or early Saturday before heading into the Straits of Florida. By Monday, forecasters say the center of Isaac is likely to be off the western coast of Florida near Ft. Myers.

After Isaac passes off the Gulf Coast of Florida, forecasters are watching where it may turn next. Several forecast models indicate that heavy rains may move into Georgia, with some rain making it as far inland as Atlanta by late next week.

A hurricane watch is in effect for Puerto Rico, Vieques, Culebra, Haiti and the US and British Virgin Islands.

A tropical storm warning is in effect for Martinique, Dominica, Guadeloupe and surrounding islands, St. Martin, St. Kitts, Nevis, Antigua, Barbuda, Montserrat and Anguilla, Saba, St. Eustatius, St. Maarten, the British Virgin Islands, Vieques, Culebra and the US Virgin Islands. A tropical storm watch is in effect for the north coast of the Dominican Republic from the Haitian border eastward to north of Isla Saona.