

## Hurricane Bertha gains strength



A satellite picture from 10:45 a.m. ET Monday shows Hurricane Bertha over the Atlantic.

**MIAMI, Florida (CNN)** -- Hurricane Bertha strengthened Monday, hours after becoming the first hurricane of the 2008 Atlantic season, according to the National Hurricane Center.

As of 11 a.m. ET, Bertha was 775 miles (1,247 kilometers) east of the northern Leeward Islands and was moving toward the west-northwest at close to 15 mph (24 kph).

Its maximum sustained winds were clocked at 90 mph (145 kph), up from 75 mph (120 kph) earlier Monday.

"Some strengthening is forecast during the next 24 hours, and Bertha could become a Category 2 hurricane later today or tonight," the center said.

A Category 2, or moderate, hurricane has wind speeds between 96 mph and 110 mph (154 kph and 177 kph).

There is a small chance that Bertha will make landfall in the United States.

Bermuda could be affected by the hurricane this weekend.

The storm formed Thursday in the far eastern Atlantic, off Africa, near the southern Cape Verde Islands. It strengthened into a hurricane early Monday.

The first tropical storm of the season, Arthur, formed May 31 near the coast of Belize and dumped heavy rain on Central America and southern Mexico.

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[http://www.cnn.com/2008/US/weather/07/07/hurricane.bertha/index.html?eref=rss\\_us#cn-STCOther1](http://www.cnn.com/2008/US/weather/07/07/hurricane.bertha/index.html?eref=rss_us#cn-STCOther1)  
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