# Severe Weather Brings Flooding to Rhode Island and Southern US



**Severe Weather Hits Rhode Island and the Southern US**

**Rhode Island:**

Nearly 7 inches of rainfall drenched Washington County, Rhode Island, on May 16, 2024, due to a stalled storm system south of New England. Meteorologist Ken Mahan noted a moderating trend by evening. T.F. Green International Airport recorded 1.86 inches, breaking the previous daily record of 1.08 inches set in 1971.

Inland areas experienced less rainfall, with North Central Airport in Smithfield receiving 3.64 inches, while Providence saw 1.45 inches. The Pawtuxet River in Cranston is expected to crest at 10.6 feet, a moderate flood stage. Shellfish areas along the southern coast have been closed due to elevated bacteria levels from the heavy rainfall, expected to reopen on May 23.

**Southern US:**

A significant flash flooding event is occurring across parts of eastern Texas and western Louisiana. The Weather Prediction Center issued a rare Level 4 high risk of excessive rainfall for these regions, impacting over 600,000 residents. Rainfall totals of 2-6 inches are anticipated through Saturday, with some locations potentially receiving up to a foot of rain within 48 hours.

Severe storms in Texas have already prompted flash flood warnings, with additional storms expected to affect Louisiana and Mississippi. Nearly 10 million people are under a tornado watch. Flood danger is heightened by drenched soils unable to absorb more rain, creating conditions for widespread flash flooding. Drenching storms are forecasted to move eastward, affecting the Gulf Coast into Friday, with significant flooding risks continuing in Mississippi and Alabama.

This weather pattern contributes to one of the wettest years on record for the Gulf Coast, with multiple cities experiencing above-average rainfall and major river flooding similar to levels seen during Hurricane Harvey in 2017.