

warning of flood risk in Houston from a major hurricane

Posted by Joan Russow

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Hurricane Harvey slammed into the Gulf Coast of Texas late Friday night as a Category 4 storm, and, since making landfall near Corpus Christi, has [dumped record rainfall on Houston](#) and the surrounding areas. A full-blown catastrophe is underway there as tens of thousands fled the area, and thousands of those who didn't evacuate have been [rescued by emergency responders and volunteers](#). Harvey, now a tropical storm, has [dropped an estimated 11 trillion gallons](#) of rain on Texas, and much more is on the way, particularly for Houston, the nation's fourth-largest city, which is expected to shatter all-time rainfall records.

Last year, two journalists saw a disaster like what is unfolding at the hands of Harvey coming. [Neena Satija and Kiah Collier](#), reporters for The Texas Tribune, wrote a story published in December 2016 that warned of a possible disaster amid an extreme weather event like the one brought by Hurricane Harvey. The piece, which was produced in association with Pro Publica, was titled "[Boomtown, Floodtown](#)" and explored why the Houston area was so vulnerable to a flooding catastrophe. The effects of climate change are one factor that makes the Houston area particularly vulnerable, but more than that, the report said, has been the population boom in recent decades and the rapid — and unchecked — development that's taken place to accommodate the influx of people moving there. This is hardly Houston's first calamity from a major storm. Tropical Storm Allison in 2001 poured 40 inches of rain on Houston over five days, leading to widespread damage and 22 deaths, Satija and Collier reported.

Their story followed a report in March by Satija and Collier and two other colleagues, Al Shaw and Jeff Larson, titled "[Hell and High Water](#)," which demonstrated why the Houston area, home to the country's largest oil refining and petrochemical industrial complex, was a disaster waiting to happen. Below, see drone footage obtained by CNN showing the extent of the flooding and damage around the Houston area since Harvey's rains began falling.

[2 women wrote prescient story warning of flood risk in Houston from a major hurricane](#) - WITW STAFF

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