

## Real World Graduation: Question 12

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### Question 12

There are about 85 named storms worldwide each year [1]. Prior to 1950, hurricanes were not officially named. Hurricanes were given official names after 1953, and the minimum sustained winds necessary to qualify as a hurricane was 74 MPH [2]. In 2002, tropical storms also began to be named (having sustained winds greater than 38 MPH) in an effort to legitimize claims of "man-made global warming" [3 - 5]. Thus, the number of named storms has grown over time, due to the lowering of wind speeds used as the criteria. Every such storm, whether a tropical storm, or hurricane, has the same characteristics: strong winds, large waves impacting the shore, and a lot of rainfall. Why does every TV news outlet feel it is necessary to send a reporter to the beach before and after every storm to show viewers that this one will cause high winds, large waves, and heavy rainfall, exactly like all the others that have occurred during the past 100,000 years?

- a) Because TV was not around for the first 99,960 years of hurricanes and tropical storms, and they are trying to catch up
- b) TV anchors deserve a chance to do a little surfing
- c) So there will be a photographic record of the damage, for insurance purposes
- d) To conduct interviews with the local people, who can describe what they expect or what they saw afterward from the storm
- e) Some combination of c) and d)

[1] "Number of category 4 and 5 hurricanes has doubled over 35 years", University Corporation for Atmospheric Research, 16 Sep 2005 press release

[2] U. S. Army Corps of Engineers

[3] "NOAA inflating storm numbers and aiding political campaign for carbon restrictions", The National Center for Public Policy Research press release, 30 Nov 2007

[4] 2007 Hurricane Season: In Like a Lamb, Out Like A Lion?", The National Center for Public Policy Research press release, 30 Aug 2007

[5] 2007 Hurricane Update, Have Records Been Broken?", The National Center for Public Policy Research press release, 10 Sep 2007

### Answer to Question 12

This is a trick question. All of the answers provided are wrong.

The reason TV networks send reporters to the beach whenever a storm comes ashore is that they have an enormous amount of airtime to fill, and looking at rain is easier than reporting events of real news interest. Answers a) and b) might be true, but do not relate to the question. Answer c) is false because the news corporation is not interested in insurance claims, unless it is their facility. Answer d) is false because the locals are going to tell the news reporter what everyone already knows: there will be strong winds, large waves, and a lot of rainfall.

A second reason for coverage of hurricanes is that it gives the news networks an opportunity to advance the notion that the weather is worse now than in previous centuries because mankind has affected the climate. They have an advantage in convincing the dummies: there is no video of hurricanes in any century prior to the 1900's. Therefore, any claim can be made about the relative severity of the weather because there are no means of drawing direct comparisons (and little reliable data recorded prior to about 1880).

We are seeing more serious effects from this phenomenon. In the past (prior to cable TV), news segments were fairly limited, and the anchors were able to get out the facts of a story, with only a small amount of time for editorializing (which was clearly labeled as such). But with "so much air time to fill", and active 24 hours a day, the "news" often turns to gossip, speculation, rumors, anonymous accusations, ignorant opinions, and pure ideology. It is becoming increasingly difficult for a viewer to get a straight story in chronological order, with actual facts, anywhere in the mainstream media. This trend is not good for the nation, or even for the media itself.