Dorian turns north and begins lashing parts of eastern Canada

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Toronto: Dorian arrived on Canadaâ€™s Atlantic coast Saturday with heavy rain and powerful winds, toppling a construction crane in Halifax and knocking out power for more than 300,000 people a day after the storm wreaked havoc on North Carolinaâ€™s Outer Banks.

Residents of Nova Scotia braced for heavy rainfall and potential flooding along the coast, as officials in Halifax urged people to secure heavy objects that might become projectiles. Businesses were encouraged to close early.

â€œWe do not want the citizens of Halifax roaming downtown as the water is coming in,â€• said Erica Fleck, assistant chief of community risk reduction in Halifax, the provincial capital and home to 400,000 people.

As Canada prepared for Dorian, floodwaters receded Saturday from North Carolinaâ€™s Outer Banks, leaving behind a muddy trail of destruction. (AP Photo)

A crane toppled and crashed into the side of a downtown apartment building under construction. In the cityâ€™s south end, a roof was ripped off an apartment complex, and firefighter Jeff Paris said several apartment buildings were being evacuated. With the collapsed crane and all the down trees and power lines, itâ€™s fortunate there are no significant injuries or deaths, he said.

â€œThe power went out hours ago, but we were well prepared,â€• said Tim Rissesco, who lives on the east side of Halifax harbor in Dartmouth. â€œWeâ€™ve got snacks and food and weâ€™re hunkered down in the house playing board games and watching the rain and the wind.â€•

As Canada prepared for Dorian, floodwaters receded Saturday from North Carolinaâ€™s Outer Banks, leaving behind a muddy trail of destruction. The stormâ€™s worst damage in the US appeared to be on Ocracoke Island, which even in good weather is accessible only by boat or air and is popular with tourists for its undeveloped beaches. Longtime residents who waited out the storm described strong but manageable winds followed by a wall of water that flooded the first floors of many homes and forced some to await rescue from their attics.

Dorian swept across Nova Scotia and forecasters expected it to pass near or over Prince Edward Island late Saturday, and then move to Newfoundland and Labrador on Sunday. (AP)

â€œWeâ€™re used to cleaning up dead limbs and trash thatâ€™s floating around,â€• said Ocracoke Island resident

and business owner Philip Howard. â€œBut now itâ€™s everything: picnic tables, doors, lumber thatâ€™s been floating around.â€•

Howard said by phone Saturday that flooding at his properties on the North Carolina island is 13 inches (0.3 meters) higher than the levels wrought by a storm in 1944, which he said had long been considered the worst. He raised his home higher than the 1944 flood level and still got water inside.

â€œItâ€™s overwhelming,â€• said Howard, who owns the Village Craftsmen, a store that sells handcrafted pottery, glass and kitchen items. He said much of the merchandise on the lower shelves is ruined. Pieces of pottery were floating around inside.

Canadian officials prepared for the possibility of flooding, washouts and storm surges, and Public Safety Minister Ralph Goodale said the military was mobilizing to assist Nova Scotia. (AP)

Inside his house, the floorboards were buckling and curling up after being warped by the water, he said.

Gov. Roy Cooper said about 800 people had remained on the island to wait out Dorian. The storm made landfall Friday morning over the Outer Banks as a far weaker storm than the monster that devastated the Bahamas. Yet despite having been downgraded to a Category 1 storm, it still sent seawater surging into homes on Ocracoke, many for the first time in memory.

More than 1,100 Bahamians arrived in Palm Beach, Florida, after being evacuated by cruise ship from their hurricane-battered islands.

The Grand Celebration cruise ship returned to its home port after setting sail Thursday for Freeport, Grand Bahama, to deliver more than 112 tons of supplies and ferry dozens of health workers and emergency crews.

The storm made landfall Saturday evening near Sambro Creek, about 15 miles (24 kilometers) south of Halifax with maximum sustained winds of 100 mph (161 kph).

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Canadian officials prepared for the possibility of flooding, washouts and storm surges, and Public Safety Minister Ralph Goodale said the military was mobilizing to assist Nova Scotia.

Novia Scotia Power Inc. reported more than 300,000 customers were in the dark by 7 p.m. (6 p.m. EDT), with power out in parts of Halifax, Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick. Karen Hutt, the utilityâ€™s chief executive, said Dorian is the largest weather event the company had ever responded to, and 1,000 workers were ready to restore power once itâ€™s safe.

Hurricanes in Canada are somewhat rare in part because once the storms reach colder Canadian waters, they lose their main source of energy. Canadian Hurricane Centre meteorologist Ian Hubbard said the last hurricanes to make landfall in Canada were Hurricane Igor and Hurricane Earl in September, 2010.

The National Hurricane Center in Miami said Dorian was officially a post-tropical cyclone, not a hurricane, though it still

packed hurricane-force winds.

Dorian lashed the eastern tip of Maine with heavy rain, strong winds and high surf as the storm passed offshore. Several hundred homes and businesses lost power.

In North Carolina, the governor said officials were aware of no serious injuries on the Outer Banks from the storm. About 200 people were in shelters and 45,000 without power as of mid-day Saturday, according to the governorâ€™s office. Emergency officials transported fuel trucks, generators, food and water to Okracoke.

At least five deaths in the Southeast were blamed on Dorian. Four were men in Florida or North Carolina who died in falls or by electrocution while trimming trees, putting up storm shutters or otherwise getting ready for the hurricane. North Carolina officials said a 67-year-old man died Friday in Pamlico County after he collapsed while cleaning storm debris.

Dorian slammed the Bahamas at the start of the week with 185 mph (295 kph) winds, killing at least 43 people and obliterating countless homes. From there, it swept past Florida and Georgia, then sideswiped the Carolinas on Thursday, spinning off tornadoes that peeled away roofs and flipped recreational vehicles.

Ocracoke resident and restaurant owner Jason Wells said he lost three vehicles and a golf cart to floodwaters, and he has $5,000 worth of food in a freezer on an island that still lacks power. He said by text message Saturday that he and family members were already bleaching and disinfecting their houses, but he feared weeks could pass before electricity returned to most houses because of wiring problems caused by floodwaters.

â€œWe are a close knit community. We will power on,â€• Wells wrote. â€œWe will persevere. We are family. Time to get to work.â€•

- AP