



## In the iPhone of the Hurricane

Posted [14 October 2008 @ 6am](#) in [Uncategorized](#)

*iPhone Atlas staffer David W. Martin, documents his experiences with the Apple iPhone and various applications that helped him survive the passing of hurricane Ike through his Southeast Texas community.*

### Hurricane Ike – The Stats

**Ike** made U.S. landfall at [Galveston, Texas](#), on September 13 at 2:10am CDT (07:10 UTC), as a Category 2 hurricane with winds of 110 mph (177 km/h) and a central pressure of 952 mbar (28.11 inHg). The 2:00 am NHC advisory cited tropical storm and hurricane force winds extending 275 miles (445 km) and 120 miles (190 km), respectively, from the center.

We noticed the winds from Ike, however, before the storm made landfall. Power was lost several hours before the storm struck the coastline, and flooding had already started well before that. The result was the loss of the TV, generally the best form of communication in a hurricane. All of us, after all, like to see it coming don't we? Weather radar, tornado warnings, bands of rain, etc. In any event with the loss of power we were also left without landline phone services. I encourage everyone to get and keep a phone handy that does not require electricity for use—the house I took shelter in did not have one. I left mine at home and won't be the next time around. However we did have a battery operated AM/FM radio to listen to local news bulletins. We also had our cell phones that we made sure were fully charged and kept charged for as long as possible.

I of course had my iPhone 3G with me and I had updated it to iPhone OS 2.1 prior to the storm coming. It was fully charged and would prove extraordinarily throughout the long night ahead of us. I took some time to look at iPhone OS 2.1 to keep my mind off of things and do some work.

The storm arrived, and we were plunged into darkness, relying on battery operated devices, iPods, laptops, cell phones, lanterns, candles and flashlights. We'd gone to bed early so that we could all stay up and keep watch when the storm came. Some people might laugh about that, but the problem with these storms is that they have a tremendous amount of wind, rain and most pernicious, tornados. If we had to leave in a hurry to seek shelter elsewhere we'd have to act fast. So we needed to be wide awake.

When Ike was in full force, with the power out, I sought a means of contacting the outside world and discovered that my iPhone was working and able to make a data connection to AT&T's network. I, of course, turned off the features on the phone that I did not require such as 3G, Push, etc. so that I could get the most out of my batteries in the iPhone. Much to my surprise the phone maintained a connection throughout the whole ordeal. I knew I had very useful tool for keeping informed about what was going on around me during the storm.

### **In the Eye of the Storm**

Because the storm landed in Galveston we not only got hit by it once, but twice. The reason is simple remember that hurricanes are circular so we got the first part of the circle followed by the dead calm of the eye of the storm – where we took time to assess damage, etc. and then the second part came through which seemed worse than the first...

### **Wi-Ex ZBoost YX510-PCS-CEL**

The Wi-Ex zBoost YX510-PCS-CEL cell phone signal extender actually improves your cell phone's reception of cellular radio signals. This device proved to be very handy after Hurricane Ike had passed and there was some obvious damage to cellular infrastructure due to flooding and loss of power due to the water, wind or both. The YX510 successfully pulled in cellular signals from other towers and helped keep us connected via iPhone when others were experiencing signal reception problems. I will be covering this device in detail in a later review, but my initial testing was very promising considering the conditions I was testing the device in.

### **Calm Weather**

Southeast Texas is enjoying calm weather again. I was one of the lucky ones since we sustained minor damage to our shelter. We came through better than most people. My own home was unscathed this time around. I was truly blessed, however over 26 of my friends are homeless and hundreds if not thousands are homeless. If you feel the need to assist your neighbors in

Texas then you should consider volunteering time or making donations to the [Red Cross](#) for hurricane relief efforts.

  
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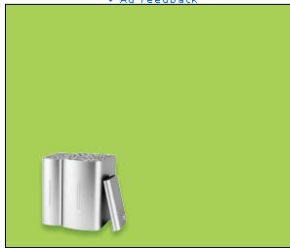
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