

Storms

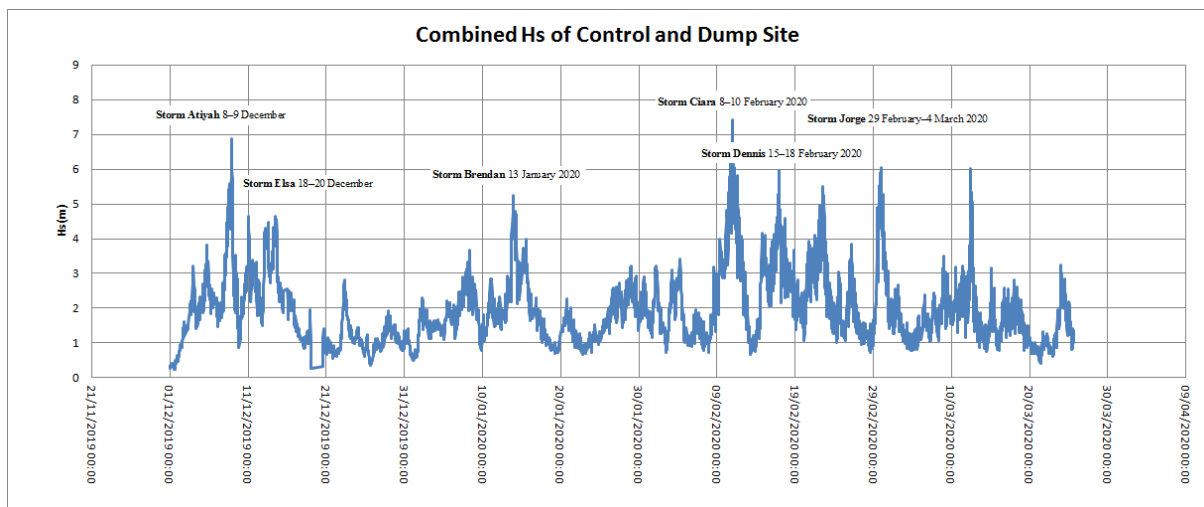
"A very strong Polar Jetstream, further south than normal brought a series of vigorous Atlantic depressions to Ireland," Met Eireann spokesperson quoted in the Independent.ie, 03.03.2020.¹

A significant feature of this dredging campaign has been the unusually high number of storms of this past winter. These storms severely limited the ability of the tug and barge to transport material to the dump site. Dredging activities were also curtailed by the inability to empty the barge, but rock breaking activities managed to continue.

The following storms were encountered...

Storm Atiyah 8–9 December
Storm Elsa 18–20 December
Storm Brendan 13 January 2020
Storm Ciara 8–10 February 2020
Storm Dennis 15–18 February 2020
Storm Jorge 29 February–4 March 2020

The Significant Wave Height increases during storms (wave monitors at the Control Site and Dumpsite); the following graph illustrates the frequency and severity of the storms. The storm names are superimposed on the graph.



Details of the main storms of the winter are listed below.

Storm Atiyah

Date of impact 8–9 December. Lowest pressure, 956 mbar

Met Éireann named Atiyah on 6 December, issuing orange wind warnings for the western counties and yellow for the other counties. The agency expected mean wind speeds of 65 to 80 km/h (40 to 50

¹ <https://www.independent.ie/weather/exceptionally-wet-and-windy-three-named-storms-and-record-rainfall-for-many-areas-in-february-39010833.html> Accessed 24.03.2020

mph) and gusts up to 130 km/h (81 mph) on Sunday 8 December across Ireland. On 8 December, a red weather warning was issued for Kerry.

Storm Elsa

Date of impact 18–20 December. Lowest pressure, 961 mbar

Besides a nation-wide yellow warning, Met Éireann issued an orange weather warning for County Cork in the evening of 18 December for a small secondary depression associated with storm Elsa. The yellow warnings for counties Mayo and Galway were further upgraded to orange warnings at 20:00, an hour before the storm passed these counties. Severe flooding and extreme gusts were reported at the County Galway coastline. Close to 22:00, a storm surge breached the Promenade on Salthill in Galway City; over 50 cars were lost to the flood waters. Besides the flooding, a ship was also forced onto rocks. Severe flooding was also reported in the Spanish Arch, Port of Galway, Oranmore and Kinvara areas of Galway. Gusts of up to 125 km/h (78 mph) were reported at the Mace Head weather station on the West Galway coast. Treefalls occurred across the city and county, blocking numerous roads leading to Galway City. Around 22:30, Galway City Council activated its Emergency Response Plan and issued a notice warning people to stay indoors and to remain there unless it was of extreme importance. A similar warning was issued by Galway County Council. This storm had a relatively moderate affect in Donegal.

Storm Brendan

Date of impact: 13 January 2020. Lowest pressure, 940 mbar

Storm Brendan made landfall in Ireland on 13 January, causing power outages; there were also ferry cancellations across Scotland and the closure of schools in the Outer Hebrides.

Storm Ciara

Date of impact 8–10 February 2020. Lowest pressure, 943 mbar

On 6 February, Met Éireann issued a country-wide yellow wind and rain warning for Saturday 8 February through Sunday 9 February, expecting average wind speeds from 50 to 65 km/h (31 to 40 mph) and gusts up to 110 km/h (68 mph) and rainfall of up to 40 mm (1.6 in). Additional orange wind warnings were issued for the counties Galway, Mayo and Donegal on 7 February.

Storm Dennis

Date of impact 15–18 February 2020. Lowest pressure, 920 mbar

Storm Dennis was named by the Met Office on 11 February, with heavy rain and strong winds expected to affect the UK from 15 February. It was quickly nicknamed “Dennis the Menace,” as a reference from The Beano character of the same name.

Storm Jorge (Hor Hey)

Date of impact 29 February–4 March 2020. Lowest pressure, 952 mbar

Met Eireann have issued Status Red wind warnings for County Galway and County Clare and Status Orange wind warnings for the remainder of the country, while in the United Kingdom the Met Office have issued yellow wind warnings for all of Wales and Northern Ireland, most of England and parts of Scotland before it even hit Iceland.

