# Flooding threat eases

## Drier days could be ahead after more weekend rains

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The threat of yet another rainy summer weekend is upon us, but this time it won't feel much like summer — and isn't expected to result in crippling floods, weather experts say.

An unnamed tropical storm in the Gulf of Mexico had brought about fears this week of flood-inducing rains moving into the Upstate, which in a rare phenomenon of weather faces fall-like temperatures that could break records.

While that storm has moved west and isn't expected to impact the area, moisture will be coming from the Gulf in a pattern that has defined this rainy summer, said Lauren Visin, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Greer.

Just how much moisture isn't for certain, but any rain that falls would be spread over a longer period of time compared to what the area has seen in recent downpour events, she said.

Next week appears to be an opportunity for the Upstate's saturated soils to dry out, Visin said.

The dry weather would be good news amid the latest reports from the National Hurricane Center that the tropical storm season is set to be more active than normal for the rest of the warm season.

The dry soil would make whatever big rains might come from a tropical storm less prone to cause flooding that could wash out roads and crops, said Dennis Chastain, a member of the state's drought response committee.

Wet soil is less able to absorb rainwater, leaving it to wash away, particularly in ur-

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ban areas.

"What we need right now is a stretch of dry weather to get the soil dry," Chastain said. "You could literally wring water out of the soil right now."

A week to two weeks of dry weather would lessen the impact on soil of heavy rains from a tropical storm, though rainfall of that magnitude would still greatly impact the rivers and lakes that are already full, Visin said.

If a tropical storm were to come through, Visin said, "The rivers and the dams would be our main concern. We're crossing our fingers on that right now."

The closest threat right now is Tropical Storm Erin making its way from the coast of Africa in the Atlantic. On Friday, however, the storm had weakened into the lesser category of a tropical depression.

Erin isn't expected to impact the Upstate, Visin said.

The high temperature for today is expected to stay just below 70 degrees, according to the Weather Service.

If the temperature doesn't exceed 71 degrees, it would break a record for coolness set in 1964, the Weather Service said.

The cool weather is being caused by wedge of air that is pressed against the Appalachians, preventing it from moving west, Visin said.