

Ex-FEMA chief Michael Brown — AKA 'Brownie' — says 'we haven't learned anything from Katrina'

[cnbc.com/2017/08/25/ex-fema-chief-michael-brown-we-havent-learned-anything-from-katrina.html](https://www.cnbc.com/2017/08/25/ex-fema-chief-michael-brown-we-havent-learned-anything-from-katrina.html)

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- Former FEMA chief Michael Brown says it appears the U.S. hasn't learned anything from Hurricane Katrina.
- "It's been 12 years since we've had a major storm hit the Gulf Coast, so people aren't aware that it's not necessarily the winds," he says.
- In 2005, Brown was infamously praised during a tour of Katrina destruction by President George W. Bush, who told him as cameras rolled, "Brownie, you're doing a heck of a job."

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[We haven't learned anything from Hurricane Katrina: Former FEMA Director](#) 1:07 PM ET Fri, 25 Aug 2017 | 02:44

Former FEMA chief Michael Brown said Friday it appears the U.S. hasn't learned anything from Hurricane Katrina.

In an appearance Friday on CNBC's "[Halftime Report](#)," Brown said media reports that people in the path of Hurricane Harvey refuse to evacuate their homes proves his point.

"It's been 12 years since we've had a major storm hit the Gulf Coast, so people aren't aware that it's not necessarily

the winds. A Category 2 or 3, depending on the kind of structure you have where you live, you can probably withstand that," Brown told CNBC.

"But I'm more concerned about all the weather reports and all the things I've looked at online in terms of the National Hurricane Center which indicate that this may turn out to be more like Tropical Storm Allison, which hit Houston back in 2001," he added.

That storm was one of the most expensive and damaging due to catastrophic flooding, Brown said.

In 2005, the former FEMA chief was infamously praised during a tour of Katrina destruction by President [George W. Bush](#), who told him as cameras rolled, "Brownie, you're doing a heck of a job." Brown quit his post shortly after that over what was viewed as a mishandling of the federal response to Katrina.

On Friday, authorities warned residents to take shelter from what could be life-threatening winds and floods as Hurricane Harvey, a Category 2 storm, roars out of the Gulf of Mexico.

"Now is the time to urgently hide from the wind. Failure to adequately shelter may result in serious injury, loss of life, or immense human suffering," the National Weather Service said Friday.

Brown said he believes the government is being proactive. He said current FEMA Administrator William B. "Brock" Long understands the relationship between federal and local government and has the ear of the president.

— *NBC News contributed to this report.*