

## Keeping track of nature's dangers

*A COMPANY from Sussex has developed software that allows users to track the location, path and severity of hurricanes, from the comfort of their home. Ambiental Technical Solutions, based at the Sussex Innovation Centre at Falmer, Brighton, says its Hurricane Tracker can be downloaded on to PCs and laptops.*

The research company provides blue chip companies such as Norwich Union and BP with the technology to assess the threat posed by environmental hazards. It says Hurricane Tracker can be used by emergency planners and businesses, such as insurance and travel companies, that they need information about hurricanes as they develop. The programme uses Google Earth satellite software and, according to Ambiental, is easy to install and use. The software is fed by the National Weather Service and incorporate a range of new tracking technologies.

Ambiental's founder and managing director Dr Justin Butler said hurricanes have been increasing in magnitude and frequency over the past 35 years. He said: "Recent events such as Asian Tsunami and Hurricane Katrina have highlighted the increasing vulnerability of urban populations to catastrophic events". "There is a growing need for both business and consumers to better understand these risks". "The impact of natural disasters on the UK business market, across sectors such as insurance, reinsurance, travel and tourism should not be underestimated". "We have developed Hurricane Tracker and other services in response to this, enabling businesses to better understand and reduce their exposure to catastrophic risk."

Hurricane Tracker is the latest software package from Ambiental. Other products in the company's portfolio – including its flood mapping solutions Flowroute – allow organizations and individuals to mitigate the damage and costs associated with natural disasters.

Ambiental started as a partner-ship of researchers at Cambridge University and was incorporated as a Company in 2002 by Dr Butler.

The firm is looking for investors to help it develop and launch new products.

More information can be found at [www.ambiental.co.uk](http://www.ambiental.co.uk).