

# President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. Approves Emergency Declaration for U.S. Virgin Islands

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**Release Date: Novembre 19, 2023**

**WASHINGTON** -- FEMA announced today that federal disaster assistance has been made available to the U.S. Virgin Islands to supplement the territory's response efforts due to the emergency conditions resulting from elevated levels of lead and copper in the water supply beginning on Oct. 25, 2023, and continuing.

The President's action authorizes FEMA to coordinate all disaster relief efforts which have the purpose of alleviating the hardship and suffering caused by the emergency on the local population and to provide appropriate assistance for required emergency measures, authorized under Title V of the Stafford Act, to save lives, protect property and public health and safety, and to lessen or avert the threat of a catastrophe on the island of St. Croix.

Specifically, FEMA is authorized to identify, mobilize and provide, at its discretion, equipment and resources necessary to alleviate the impacts of the emergency. Emergency protective measures (Category B), including direct federal assistance, under the public assistance program will be provided for water, other necessary related items such as filters and testing and technical assistance necessary to identify and address immediate threats to public health and safety for 90 days from the start of the incident period.

Ms. Lai Sun Yee has been appointed to coordinate Federal recovery operations in the affected areas.

