

It's Not Too Soon to Prepare for the 2018 Hurricane Season

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ST. CROIX, Virgin Islands – Weathering storms is part of life in the tropics.

Before Hurricanes Irma and Maria last September, there was Tropical Storm Otto in 2010, Tropical Storm Jeanne in 2004, Hurricane Lenny in 1999, Hurricane Georges in 1998, Hurricane Bertha in 1996, Hurricane Marilyn in 1995 and Hurricane Hugo in 1989.

As Virgin Islanders continue recovering from Irma and Maria, the next Atlantic hurricane season is less than three months away. The season runs from June 1 to November 30, with the peak occurring between mid-August and late October. Officials from the Virgin Islands Territorial Emergency Management Agency (VITEMA) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) urge residents and communities to begin preparing now.

“There are a number of actions we recommend to be well prepared for the next hurricane,” said VITEMA Director Mona Barnes. “We urge you to be informed and plan ahead.”

On the [VI-Alert](#) site, users can sign up to receive emergency alerts on their cell phones. The [VITEMA Facebook page](#) and [Inform USVI.com](#) are resources for the latest news about hurricanes and preparedness.

Loss of electricity, lack of drinking water, impassable roads, impaired phone service and a severely damaged home are effects to anticipate from a powerful



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hurricane. Preparations should include stores of food and water, medications, family documents and a number of other items. There is comprehensive information about preparations on the [Ready.gov](https://www.ready.gov) website.

You may also need to be ready to evacuate, which means having a “go kit” packed and ready, knowing your hurricane evacuation route and having a plan for where you will stay.

“Starting now to be prepared for the next hurricane season gives you time to get ready over the next couple of months,” said FEMA Federal Coordinating Officer William Vogel. “Depending on the severity of the storm, it may be days before help can reach you. Everybody should be ready with a plan.”

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Disaster recovery assistance is available without regard to race, color, religion, nationality, sex, age, disability, English proficiency or economic status. If you or someone you know has been discriminated against, call FEMA toll-free at 800-621-3362 (voice, 711/VRS - Video Relay Service)

(TTY: 800-462-7585). Multilingual operators are available (press 2 for Spanish).

FEMA's mission is helping people before, during, and after a disaster.

Follow us on social media at twitter.com/femaregion2 and www.facebook.com/FEMAUSVirginIslands.

To donate or volunteer, contact the voluntary or charitable organization of your choice through the National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD) at www.nvoad.org. For those who wish to help, cash donations offer voluntary agencies the most flexibility in obtaining the most-needed resources and pumps money into the local economy to help businesses recover. The Community



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Foundation of the Virgin Islands also has the “Fund for the Virgin Islands” at www.USVIrecovery.org.



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