

Prepare Now for Peak Hurricane Season Activity

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U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS – FEMA and the Virgin Islands Territorial Emergency Management Agency urge Virgin Islands residents to update and review their disaster preparedness plans with a Tropical Storm warning issued for Potential Tropical Cyclone Five in the Atlantic. Potential Tropical Cyclone Five is expected to become a Tropical Depression later today before strengthening to a Tropical Storm as it nears the Leeward Islands with an anticipated approach to the Virgin Islands on Tuesday evening. Take steps now to prepare yourself and loved ones. Replenish your disaster supply kit, practice your emergency communications plan, stay alert and be informed.

“The recent rapid intensification of tropical cyclones in the Atlantic is a reminder for Virgin Islanders to take hurricane preparedness seriously. Now is the time to replenish items in your emergency supply kit and take steps to ensure your family is self-sufficient in the aftermath of a hurricane or tropical storm,” said FEMA Region 2 Regional Administrator David Warrington. “Review your emergency plans with your household and tell your friends and neighbors about how they could prepare for hazards from the tropical weather disturbance now in the Atlantic.”

Prepare to be self-sufficient in the immediate aftermath of this storm. Those with disabilities and others with access and functional needs might have additional considerations.

"Hurricanes unfortunately bring individual stress and physical destruction. The height of the Atlantic hurricane season means that while we continue doing our daily routines, we must be vigilant knowing there may be only a few days of notice before a tropical cyclone impacts our lives," VITEMA Director Daryl Jaschen. "Don't let your guard down. Listen and heed all notices about storm watches and warnings from official sources such as the National Weather Service, National Hurricane Center, FEMA, Government House and VITEMA."



There are steps you can take right now to ensure you and your household are better prepared for the current weather disturbance in the Atlantic and peak activity this hurricane season:

Build a survival kit. Families should be prepared to shelter in a secure and safe location for several days after a storm when roads might be impassable, gas stations and grocery stores closed, power off and communications uncertain.

- Store water for up to two weeks for drinking and sanitation, nonperishable food, medications, a first-aid kit and hygiene products.
- Store supplies to meet the needs of individual family members, including infants and young children, seniors, people with disabilities, and pets or service animals.
- Protect documents such as vital records, insurance policies, medical information, property and financial records, by storing copies in a safe deposit box or another location separate from your house. These may be necessary for survivors who could be eligible to apply for disaster assistance.

Plan for an extended power outage. Make an inventory of the items you need that rely on electricity. Plan for batteries and other alternative power sources to meet your needs when the power goes out, such as a portable charger or power bank. Have flashlights for every household member.

- Generators can be helpful when the power goes out. It is important to know how use them safely to prevent carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning and other hazards. Generators and fuel should always be used outdoors and at least 20 feet away from windows, doors and attached garages. Learn more about how to protect yourself during a power outage at <https://www.ready.gov/power-outages>

Make a Family Communications Plan. Choose an out-of-town friend or relative as a point of contact. Make sure children have emergency contacts memorized or saved in a secure place. Determine a safe, familiar place the family can go for protection or to reunite. Ensure the location is in a central and accessible location for all family members, including family members with disabilities.

If you have pets or service animals, make sure the location is animal-friendly. For more information on making a family communication plan go to [Make a Plan](#) .



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Stay Informed. Listen to local official bulletins for the most up-to-date information before, during and after a disaster. It's a good idea to have a battery or solar-powered radio to receive disaster notices and updates. Sign up for Alert VI to receive real-time notifications for emergencies in the U.S. Virgin Islands at [VITEMA - Public - Sign In \(everbridge.net\)](#) . Weather updates and instructions might also be found on the [National Weather Service's San Juan Puerto Rico](#) Facebook page.

Find more information on how to prepare at www.ready.gov/hurricanes and [Hurricanes \(vi.gov\)](http://Hurricanes.vi.gov) .

Additional Considerations for People with Disabilities

People with disabilities or access and functional needs should follow the above general instructions and consider the following additional actions:

- Create a support network. Keep a contact list in a watertight container in your emergency kit.
- Inform your support network of your emergency plan, your needs and how to communicate during an emergency.
- If you use durable medical equipment in your home that requires electricity, talk to your health care provider about how you can prepare for a power outage.
- If you are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind, or have a speech disability, make sure your emergency information includes the best way to effectively communicate with you.
- Find more information about preparedness for people with disabilities at www.ready.gov/disability .

Harden and Protect Your Property

Virgin Islanders should also take steps to protect their homes:

- Prepare to store anything from your property that could be picked up by hurricane winds and turned into a harmful object.
- Trim trees to remove dead limbs and secure rain gutters and downspouts.
- Make sure porches, decks or sheds are sound and firmly attached.
- Fasten down roofs with hurricane straps or clips and install strong bolts at the top and bottom of exterior doors. Buy or make storm shutters for windows.



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Learn more about strengthening your home from hazards storms pose from the Federal Alliance for Safe Homes (FLASH) at [Resilience – #HurricaneStrong](#) .

FEMA has deployed Incident Management Assistance Teams to the U.S. Virgin Islands and is ready to support the territory upon its request for a potential response to the weather disturbance in the Atlantic. Now is the time for the whole community to get ready for the peak of Atlantic hurricane season.

