

FEMA Continues Response Efforts and Provides Safety Tips After Tropical Storm Ernesto Affects Puerto Rico

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SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico – In the aftermath of Tropical Storm Ernesto, Government of Puerto Rico officials, along with Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and other partners continue to visit affected areas to determine the next phase of response to this event, as Puerto Rico faces the effects of the event.

On Aug. 13, President Biden authorized an Emergency Declaration to grant Disaster Federal Assistance (DFA), if required, assist the Government of Puerto Rico to respond to and recover from the impacts of Tropical Storm Ernesto. FEMA is authorized to provide federal resources for life safety and life-sustaining activities throughout the island, should the government have a need.

“Residents of Puerto Rico recovering from Tropical Storm Ernesto should take precautions as they assess their damage and begin to clean up. With thousands of people still without power, residents should be aware of the dangers of extreme heat,” said Federal Coordinating Officer Robert Little III.

1. FEMA encourages people to continue to follow these safety tips

- **If you are experiencing power outages** - Use only flashlights or battery-powered lanterns for emergency lighting. NEVER use candles during a blackout or power outage due to extreme risk of fire. Turn off or disconnect appliances, equipment or electronics. Power may return with momentary surges or spikes that can cause damage.
- **Use generators safely** - Always use generators outdoors and at least 20 feet from windows, doors and attached garages. Make sure to keep the generator dry and protected from rain or flooding.
- **Avoid carbon monoxide poisoning** - Keep portable gas stoves, camp stoves, or charcoal grills outdoors and at least 20 feet away from windows. Install



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Page 1 of 2

carbon monoxide detectors with battery backup in central locations on every level of your home.

- **Heat safety** - Drink plenty of fluids to stay hydrated. Avoid high-energy activities or work outdoors, during midday heat, if possible. Check on family members, older adults and neighbors.
- **Power lines can be dangerous** - When clearing downed trees, do not touch, cut, remove or drive over downed or damaged lines as they may be live and operational. Do not pile debris on or near utility pedestals. It is faster to repair than to replace damaged lines.
- **Have a plan** - Know how you will keep yourself, your family and your pets safe from flooding and power outages. Know how you'll contact one another and reconnect if you aren't together when flooding starts. Visit [Ready.gov](https://www.ready.gov) or [Listo.gov](https://www.listo.gov) in Spanish language for more information on how to stay safe before, during and after floods.

"FEMA remains committed to supporting all affected areas and prioritizing the safety and wellbeing of everyone on the island," said FEMA Region 2 Administrator David Warrington. "We want to remind everyone that having emergency plans in place is critical before and after a disaster."

Get additional information at www.ready.gov/hurricanes and www.fema.gov which offer tools and resources to prepare for, respond to and recover from emergency events.

