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USVI Schools Close Amid Adverse Weather from Tropical Storm Philippe

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The V.I. Department of Education has declared the closure of all educational institutions across the territory in response to the unfavorable weather brought about by Tropical Storm Philippe. While the storm is not anticipated to directly hit the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico, the National Weather Service in San Juan, Puerto Rico, has forecasted heavy rainfalls and gusty winds that are expected to last until Thursday.

Philippe, positioned east-northeast of the local islands, will dispatch its outer rainbands, causing substantial rainfall in the region. The U.S. Virgin Islands are especially projected to witness the heaviest of these weather conditions. Although the territories are likely to escape the direct wrath of the storm's winds, it is crucial for residents to brace for the associated weather disruptions.

Of all areas in the storm's path, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Culebra, Vieques, and the northern and eastern regions of Puerto Rico are forecasted to receive the most significant rainfall.

Accompanying the heaviest showers and thunderstorms might be short-lived gusty winds, with velocities ranging from 30-40 mph. Coastal inhabitants are also advised to remain vigilant, given the anticipated dangerous seas and the potential for life-threatening rip currents across the Atlantic waters and beaches.

In addition to the school closures, the Dept. of Education has mandated all essential employees, encompassing kitchen staff, custodians, maintenance workers, and school administrative teams, to present themselves at their respective campuses for assessment. State and district personnel are also directed to report to their designated workstations. As the situation unfolds, the department promises to stay vigilant, monitoring the weather patterns, and will keep the public informed about any further developments regarding school operations.

Residents are urged to remain updated with the latest storm advisories and to take all necessary safety measures to protect themselves against the possible hazards posed by Tropical Storm Philippe.