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Bryan Works to Calm Fears Over Water Contamination Concerns as Tropical Storm Tammy Looms

Government / **Published On October 19, 2023 03:21 PM /**

Janeke Simon **October 19, 2023**

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A St. Croix resident's filter after processing WAPA-supplied water.

In a press briefing from Government House this afternoon, the dual concerns of the approaching Tropical Storm Tammy and troubling water quality test results from several St. Croix communities dominated the agenda. This marks the third such briefing for the week.

According to the latest from the National Hurricane Center in Miami, the center of Tropical Storm Tammy was recorded at latitude 13.5 North, longitude 56.4 West as of 2:00 p.m. AST, placing it approximately 210 miles east of Barbados and 385 miles ESE of Guadeloupe. With winds currently at 60 mph, the storm is moving westward at a pace of 14 mph. The trajectory suggests that the storm will take a northwestward turn on Friday, putting it on course to move near or over

the Leeward Islands between Friday and Saturday.

V.I. Territorial Management Agency Director Daryl Jaschen supplemented the data, highlighting that Tammy's expected "sharp turn" will bring it "right up the Antilles chain." Predictions suggest that Tammy might intensify to hurricane strength by the time it interacts with the Leeward Islands. Despite this, no storm watches or warnings have yet been issued for the USVI. However, Jaschen warned of potential rainfall on Sunday that might lead to "isolated flash flood warnings and urban flooding along with isolated mudslides."

The NHC advisory has issued a Hurricane Watch for Guadeloupe, Antigua, Barbuda, Montserrat, St. Kitts, and Nevis. These areas have also received a Tropical Storm Warning. In addition, a Tropical Storm Watch has been activated for Barbados, Dominica, Martinique, Anguilla, St. Barthelemy, Saba and St. Eustatius, St. Maarten, and St. Martin. The swells caused by Tammy may pose a significant risk, potentially causing life-threatening surf and rip current conditions.

As the storm pushes northwest, high sea swells are anticipated. In preparation, Governor Bryan revealed that steps are being taken to secure the Bonnie G vessel, [grounded earlier this month by Tropical Storm Philippe](#). Due to its weight, compounded by the fuel it carries, the vessel remains immobile. "It's a heavy, heavy situation right now," the governor stated. Although he expressed hope that the vessel might remain in place during the storm, he emphasized the importance of precautions. Plans to offload the fuel from the vessel and attempt to move it from the reef are set for next week, weather permitting.

On the subject of water quality, Governor Bryan addressed the concerning levels of lead and copper detected in water samples from four St. Croix regions. He urged residents to remain calm as authorities are awaiting further test results. "The Department of Planning and Natural Resources is currently working with WAPA and is conducting sampling in the Mount Pleasant Housing ... as we speak," he confirmed. Stressing the absence of lead pipes in the system, he offered reassurance against the possibility of an enduring problem. Additionally, he referenced consistent lead testing results for children in the Head Start programs, suggesting no widespread contamination. "So that's why we have so much confidence as we move forward," he said. "Don't panic, we're lining this up, let's make sure we are testing this correctly."