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Rip Currents and Strong Winds Alert for Puerto Rico and U.S. Virgin Islands

National Weather Service warns of life-threatening marine hazards affecting both territories

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The National Weather Service has issued a series of advisories cautioning residents and visitors of heightened coastal and marine hazards affecting the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico from Tuesday, April 9, through Saturday, April 13.

The forecasted conditions include significantly rough seas and strong winds, posing a considerable risk to small craft operations and beachgoers.

From Tuesday to Friday, seas are predicted to reach heights of up to 8 feet, with breaking waves escalating to 8 feet as well. Winds during this period will consistently blow at 15 to 20 knots, with

gusts potentially reaching up to 30 knots. By Saturday, a slight decrease is expected, with seas up to 7 feet and breaking waves up to 5 feet, alongside winds at 15 to 20 knots and gusts up to 25 knots.

Due to these conditions, hazardous seas advisories for small craft are in place, likely to extend throughout the week. Additionally, the risk of life-threatening rip currents is rated as high for the duration, posing significant dangers to even the most experienced swimmers who may find it challenging to return to shore.

The cause of these turbulent conditions is attributed to northerly swells and moderate to locally strong trade winds. Hazardous seas are expected to impact the offshore Atlantic waters starting Tuesday evening, spreading to the coastal waters of northern Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, including both Mona and Anegada Passages by Wednesday. Although Small Craft Advisories are currently scheduled through late Thursday night, it is anticipated that these perilous marine conditions will persist into the weekend.

Likewise, life-threatening rip currents are forecasted to begin affecting northern Puerto Rico by Tuesday evening, extending to western Puerto Rico, Culebra, and the northern USVI by Wednesday. While a high risk of rip currents is officially noted through late Thursday night, these hazardous conditions are expected to continue through the weekend, with high surf conditions also possible on Wednesday.

The National Weather Service warns of the potential impacts, which include hazardous seas for small craft, rip currents that can carry swimmers out to deeper waters, dangerous surf and swimming conditions, and the possibility of localized coastal flooding and beach erosion. Residents and visitors are urged to exercise extreme caution during this period and stay informed on the latest weather updates.