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FEMA Urges Virgin Islands Residents to Update Emergency Plans as Hurricane Season Begins

Anticipated storm surge: FEMA and NOAA urge U.S. Virgin Islands to brace for a potentially historic hurricane season

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Home in St. John destroyed by Hurricane Irma in 2017. By. V.I. CONSORTIUM

With the Atlantic hurricane season now underway, the Federal Emergency Management Agency is calling on residents of the U.S. Virgin Islands to prepare for an expected above-normal season.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has forecasted between 17 and 25 named storms for 2024, highlighting the critical need for preparedness in the region.

FEMA emphasized the importance of updating emergency communications plans, a key step in ensuring safety and minimizing the stress associated with the onset of tropical weather systems. Residents are encouraged to review and revise their plans, ensuring all family members are familiar with the steps to take should a storm threaten the area.

Key recommendations from FEMA include:

- **Plan Review and Update:** Revisit your family's emergency plan. Discuss and update the details, especially with changes that might have occurred over the past year. Ensure every family member understands what to do in case of an emergency.
- **Communication Strategy:** Designate a family member outside of the territory as your emergency contact. Inform other relatives and friends to connect with this contact if local communication channels fail.
- **Accessible Information:** Utilize FEMA's provided emergency communications plan template to compile and record vital contact and medical information for each family member. This template is also available in Spanish, broadening its accessibility.

It's advisable for residents to not only update their plans but also to conduct practice drills with their households. Practicing the emergency plan helps ensure everyone knows how to effectively communicate and reunite if separated during a storm.

For further details and to access the emergency communications plan template, residents can visit FEMA's website or contact the local emergency management office. Being prepared can significantly reduce the dangers and distress that come with hurricane season in the Caribbean.