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Hazardous Marine and Coastal Conditions Impacting St. Thomas, St. John, and Other Areas in the USVI

Hazardous marine and coastal conditions, including rip currents, breaking waves, and localized flooding, are impacting St. Thomas, St. John, and surrounding areas. Advisories remain in effect, urging residents and visitors to exercise caution

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The Virgin Islands and surrounding areas are experiencing hazardous marine and coastal conditions, including dangerous rip currents and breaking waves, due to pulses of a long-period northerly swell. The National Weather Service has issued multiple advisories for these risks, highlighting specific concerns for residents and visitors in St. Thomas and St. John, as well as other islands in the region.

Coastal Flood Advisory:

A coastal flood advisory remains in effect until at least noon AST today for north-facing beaches in Puerto Rico, from Aguadilla to Fajardo. Breaking waves reaching 14 to 15 feet are expected to cause moderate to significant beach erosion, dune damage, and shallow flooding in vulnerable areas. High tide may exacerbate property and structural damage, while isolated road closures and vehicle damage are possible.

High Surf Advisory:

The high surf advisory is in effect for north, east, and west-facing beaches of Puerto Rico, Culebra, Vieques, St. Thomas, and St. John until 6 PM AST this evening. Waves are expected to reach heights of 10 to 13 feet, posing significant risks to swimmers and beachgoers.

High Risk of Rip Currents:

A high risk of rip currents has been extended until 6 AM AST Monday for beaches in St. Thomas, St. John, the northwestern to northeastern coast of Puerto Rico, and Culebra. Dangerous conditions are caused by breaking waves of 10 to 12 feet and occasionally higher. The southwest coasts of Vieques and St. Croix are also affected, with waves reaching 6 to 8 feet. Rip currents are a major threat to even experienced swimmers.

Small Craft Advisory:

Small craft advisories are in effect for the Atlantic waters and local Caribbean passages until midnight AST tonight due to hazardous seas.

Hazards and Potential Impacts

- **High Rip Current Risk:** Rip currents pose life-threatening dangers to swimmers, with the potential to pull individuals far from shore.
- **High Surf Advisory:** Large breaking waves can wash over jetties and knock down individuals, with the risk of sweeping people and pets into rough waters. Localized beach and dune erosion and minor flooding of beachfront structures are likely.
- **Coastal Flood Advisory:** Significant beach erosion, dune damage, and shallow flooding are expected, particularly near high tide, which could lead to road closures and property damage.
- **Small Craft Advisory:** Rough seas may endanger small vessels, increasing the risk of capsizing.

St. Thomas and St. John are among the most affected areas, facing high rip current risks and large breaking waves along their beaches. Residents and visitors are advised to avoid entering the water, as even experienced swimmers are at risk. Coastal areas on these islands could experience erosion and potential flooding, impacting vulnerable beachfront properties and roadways.

The National Weather Service urges caution for those near the coast and advises avoiding hazardous areas until conditions improve. Small craft operators are encouraged to remain in port due to rough seas.

For detailed updates, including maps of affected areas and real-time weather hazards, visit the Experimental Graphical Hazard Weather Outlook at weather.gov/erh/ghwo?wfo=sju.

These hazardous conditions are expected to persist through the evening and into Monday morning, posing ongoing risks to life and property in the region. Residents and visitors are urged to stay informed and take necessary precautions.

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