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DPNR Urges Boaters and Builders to Secure Property as Hurricane Erin Nears Virgin Islands

DPNR is calling on boaters to secure vessels in designated safe havens and on contractors to safeguard construction sites as Hurricane Erin approaches, stressing mooring protocols, erosion control, and debris removal to protect lives and property.

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The V.I. Department of Planning and Natural Resources is advising boaters, contractors, developers, and homebuilders across the Virgin Islands to take immediate precautions as Hurricane Erin approaches the region.

Boaters in both districts are urged to secure their vessels in designated safe havens and follow the three-point mooring system outlined in the “Survive a Hurricane” booklet available from

VITEMA. In St. Thomas/St. John, safe havens include Benner Bay, Mandahl Pond, and Flamingo Bay. Hurricane Hole is under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service, and boaters must coordinate with the NPS Chief Ranger of Protection on St. John for assigned mooring locations. In St. Croix, the designated safe haven is Salt River.

Entry to safe havens will be on a first-come, first-served basis, with enforcement officers on hand to maintain order. Boaters are reminded that hurricane anchors may remain in place for the season, but vessels must be marked with a mooring ball displaying the vessel's registration number. Navigational channels in Benner Bay and Salt River must remain clear, and no vessels are allowed in Krause Lagoon or its channel, as the area is a Homeland Security Zone.

DPNR stresses that boaters should not remain aboard during the storm and should use land-based shelters arranged through VITEMA. After the hurricane season is officially over, all hurricane anchors and gear must be removed. Any vessels that sink or wash ashore must be reported to DPNR with their GPS location and salvaged by their owners.

In addition to boating safety, DPNR is urging all contractors, developers, and homebuilders to implement erosion and sediment control measures immediately. This includes preserving natural vegetation, installing silt fencing, using sediment traps, and securing all construction materials and equipment that could become airborne in high winds.

Commissioner Jean-Pierre Oriol also advises property owners with wind turbines to lower their towers ahead of the storm and clear the setback perimeter of any potential debris.

For more information or to report concerns, residents can contact the Division of Environmental Enforcement at (340) 774-3320 or (340) 773-5774.