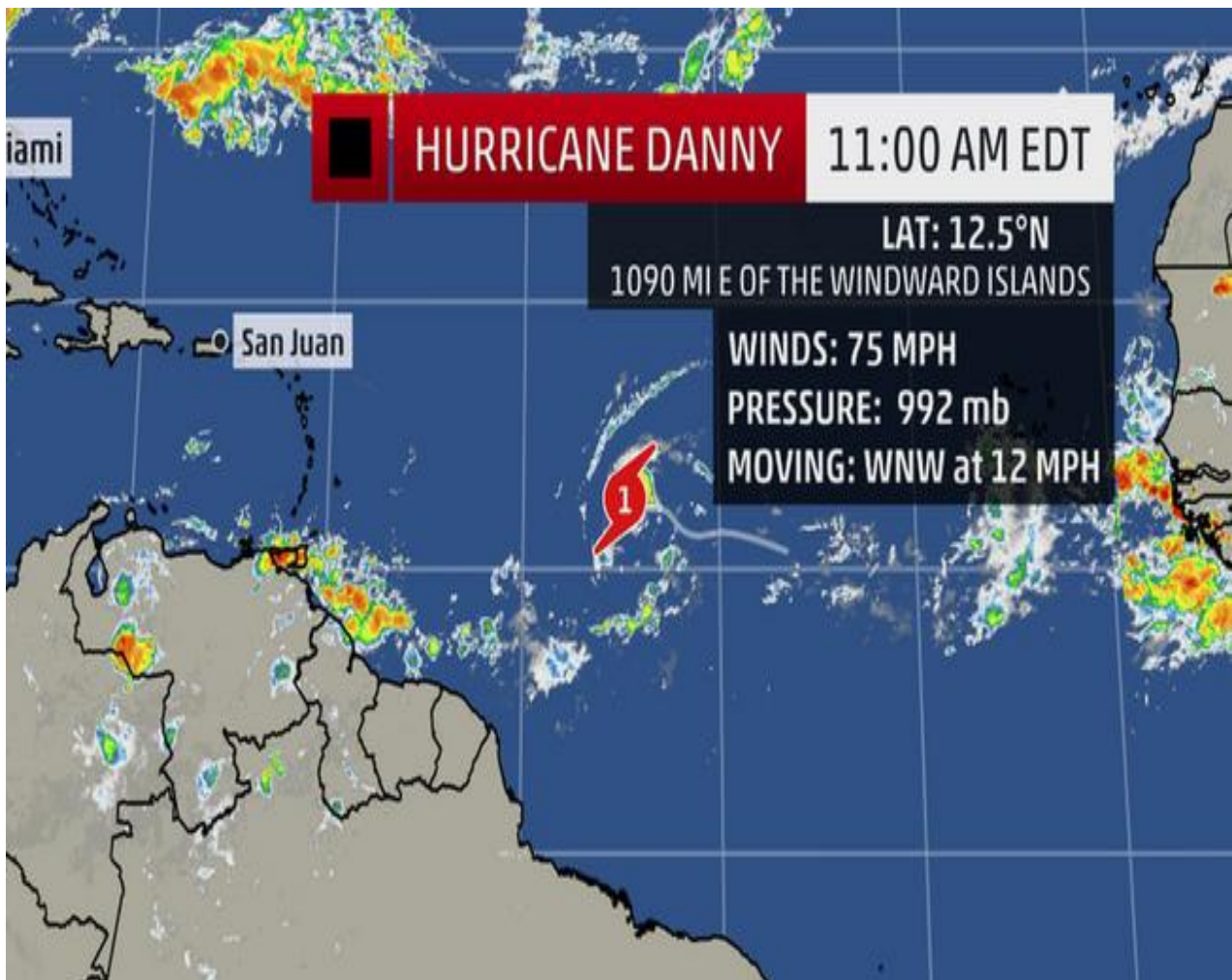


The Virgin Islands Consortium

Danny Strengthens Into First Hurricane Of 2015, Public Urged To Be Vigilant

VIC News / **Published On August 20, 2015 04:35 PM /**

Ernice Gilbert **August 20, 2015**



Danny has strengthened into the first hurricane of the 2015 Atlantic Hurricane Season, VITEMA announced this afternoon. However its impact on the territory remains uncertain, according to the government agency.

At 11 a.m., the center of the eye of Hurricane Danny was located by satellite near latitude 12.5 degrees north, longitude 44.8 degrees west. Danny is moving toward the west-northwest near 12 miles per hour and this general motion is expected to continue for the next couple of days.

Maximum sustained winds have increased to near 75 miles per hour with higher gusts. Some additional strengthening is forecast during the next 48 hours.

Danny is a small tropical cyclone. Hurricane-force winds only extend outward up to 10 miles (20 km) from the center and tropical-storm-force winds extend outward up to 60 miles.

There are currently no watches and warnings in effect.

USVI Impact Remains Uncertain

As of 11 a.m., Hurricane Danny's impact on the US Virgin Islands remains uncertain, according the National Weather Service – San Juan Forecast Office.

"There is no data from the National Hurricane Center and the Weather Prediction Center because there is still a lot of uncertainty," said NWS meteorologist Jay Alamo. "It is very difficult to forecast. The small size makes it susceptible to fluctuation both up and down."

"Once the storm gets closer, on Saturday or Sunday, then we will have a better idea," Alamo said.

Alamo added that based latest forecast models, Hurricane Danny also has no local effects on the marine conditions.

VITEMA Director Mona Barnes continues to encourage the public to monitor the storm very closely and to be prepared to act in the event Danny impacts the territory.

"Watches and warnings may come on short notice so I'm urging everyone to be very vigilant and to be prepared," Barnes said. "Make sure there is a plan in place so the entire family knows what to do and make sure that your emergency supply kit is well-stocked, and stay tuned to local and television for weather updates."

Barnes added that VITEMA, through its Emergency Operations Centers (EOC), has begun emergency response coordination efforts with local government agencies. Emergency support coordinators have been placed on alert for possible EOC activation by Saturday. VITEMA's coordination efforts include FEMA Region II and the Caribbean Area Division. FEMA is continuously monitoring the system and has placed its Incident Assistance Management Team (IMAT) on alert. If activated, the IMAT will deploy to the territory within 24 hours and co-locate with VITEMA to provide emergency response support.

The National Hurricane Center will issue its next complete advisory at 5 p.m. today. VITEMA will provide updated information as it becomes available.