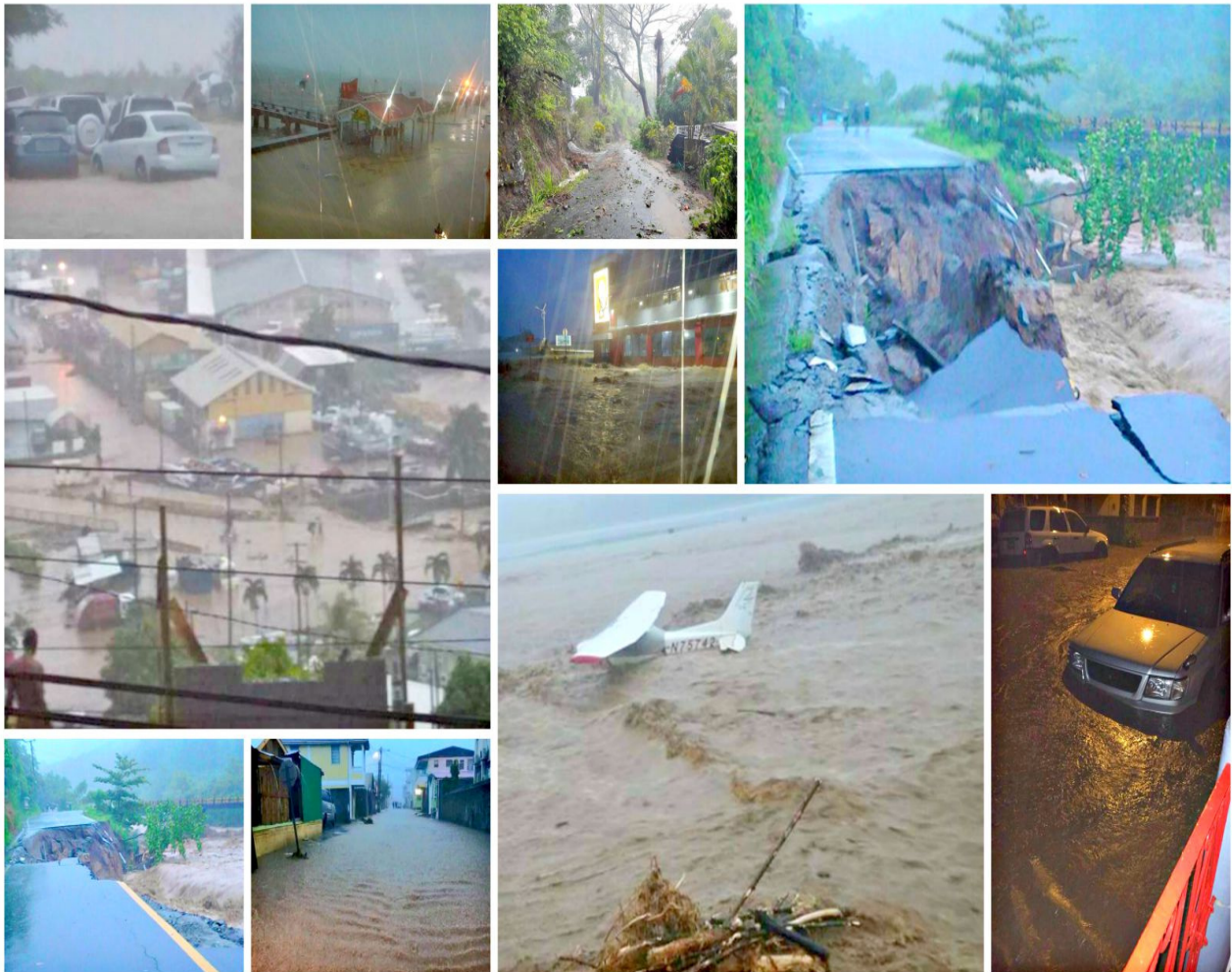


The Virgin Islands Consortium

Crisis: Erika Devastates Dominica; Storm Repositions Closer To St. Croix, Up To 12 Inches Of Rain Possible (UPDATE)

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UPDATE: Multiple national media outlets, including [The New York Times](#), NBC, CNN and the [Weather Channel](#) are reporting at least 4 deaths in Dominica following the passage of tropical storm Erika.

ORIGINAL STORY: ST. CROIX -- Reports are coming in from The Commonwealth of Dominica that tropical storm Erika has devastated the island of about 70,000 people, dropping 6-8 inches of rain in less than 6 hours, according to well-respected and ubiquitous Dominican, Alex Bruno, who's also a former news reporter, appearing for

multiple years on many of the island's prominent radio stations.

There are also multiple [video postings](#) on [Facebook](#) showing the devastation the unpredictable storm has wrought. And Curtis Mathew from DBS radio, the island's government-owned broadcast, is reporting that Dominicans are "in distress," as thousands remain stranded in the aftermath of Erika. The full audio of Mr. Curtis' reporting is through the link located near the feature image of this article.

According to Bruno, the island was placed on warning, but many ignored the storm, hoping it would bring nothing but minimal rainfall.

"The average person would have gone to sleep the night before not worrying about the effects of the storm," Bruno said. "But natural disasters take on lives of their own."

Bruno said the storm made landfall between 2:30 a.m. and 3:00 a.m., when most people were already asleep. When they awoke, however, "the flooding was a big shocker," he said

Tropical Storm Erika Devastates Dominica























Dominica's Hugo was Hurricane David, which ravaged through the island on August 29, 1979 -- some 36 years ago almost to the day. "It's more than the country can handle," Bruno said of the destruction Erika left behind. "And it's not only one area, it's everywhere -- north, south, east and west," he added. Bruno said government officials gave adequate warning, but residents of the Nature Island were not expecting such a ruinous hit.

"Dominica is in crisis, based on the reports coming in from around the country," Bruno went on. Bruno said it has been confirmed that two brothers were swept away by flood waters in Bath Estate, Roseau, the island's main town. However, it remains unknown whether they survived.

And the full extent of the storm's damage will not be known for days, as surveys have yet to be made. Bruno said officials are estimating damages in the hundreds of millions -- "if not over a billion dollars," he said, putting into perspective the cataclysmic event that was tropical storm Erika in Dominica.

Now, the latest report from the National Hurricane Center projects up to 12 inches of rain in the territory, according to its 11:00 a.m. report. A flash flood warning has also been issued.

RAINFALL:

"A Flash Flood Watch is currently in effect for the US Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico. Erika is expected to produce total rainfall accumulations of 4 to 8 inches with maximum amounts of 12 inches possible across portions of the Leeward Islands, the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico. There is a potential for flooding rainfall across the US Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico as Tropical Storm Erika moves across the eastern Caribbean," wrote the National Hurricane Center.

Maximum sustained winds are near 50 miles per hour with higher gusts. Little change in strength is forecast during the next 48 hours. Tropical storm force winds extend outward up to 105 miles from the center.

On the forecast track, the center of Erika will move near the Virgin Islands later today, move near or north of Puerto Rico tonight, and pass north of the north coast of the Dominican Republic on Friday.

On its present course, Erika will make its closest point of approach to the territory at 7 p.m. when the storm center is located some 15 miles to the south-southwest of St. Croix. It must be noted that with this advisory, the National Hurricane Center repositioned the center of the storm more to the south as a result of data from the Hurricane Hunter aircraft investigating Erika. The repositioning of the storm center more to the south also caused a repositioning of the forecast track bringing the storm closer to St. Croix when compared to earlier forecasts.

Tropical storm force winds---winds in excess of 39 miles per hour-- will arrive to St. Croix by 5 p.m. and last for at least nine hours with the peak winds of 49 miles per hour at about 8 p.m.

St. Thomas and St. John will begin to experience sustained tropical storm force winds at 7 p.m. continuing for about eight hours with the peak winds of 45 miles per hour being experienced at 9 p.m.

[Rp @sunKisskee State Of Emergency #HurricaneErika #Dominica God know why it wasn't a school day! #Island360](#)

A video posted by Caribbean Full Circle (@island360) on Aug 27, 2015 at 6:02am PDT

Images credit: Alex "Pawol" Bruno and Robert T. M. Tonge.

[Listen to the original recording](#)