

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Flash Flood Watch Remains In Effect Through Monday Evening, National Weather Service Says

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A flash flood watch remains in effect for all of the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico through this evening, the National Weather Service (NWS) announced early Monday.

The weather service says a very moist weather pattern will continue to prevail across the region through at least tonight. This deep tropical moisture, combined with local effects will keep chances high for shower development and isolated thunderstorms across the local islands. These showers and thunderstorms are expected to leave rainfall accumulations anywhere between 2 to 5 inches Monday in the most affected areas--mainly the mountains of Puerto Rico, according to NWS.

Soils are already saturated and river levels across most of Puerto Rico are higher than usual. Therefore, the potential for flash flooding across Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands continues, NWS says. Record rainfall fell in St. Croix on Sunday, emphasizing the difficulty in pin-pointing the amount and location of the highest rainfall. Therefore, preparation is the best defense.

The heavy rains will bring rapid rises in area rivers and streams and will make transiting on roads in low lying areas impassable. Additional rain will trigger dangerous mudslides and debris flows without warning, according to NWS.

Additionally, the weather service warned that recreation on flashy rivers is not recommended today. It also advised the public to keep out of reach of rapidly rising waters.

A flash flood watch means that conditions may develop that lead to flash flooding, which the weather service described as a "very dangerous situation," and urged the public to monitor later forecasts and be prepared to take action should flash flood warnings be issued.

Feature Image: Flooding in Strawberry in 2015. (Credit: Ernice Gilbert, VIC)