

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Relief Efforts Update: St. Thomas Prisoners To Be Evacuated; Supplies Reaching St. John; Be Wary Of 'GoFundMe' Accounts

Weather Updates / **Published On September 10, 2017 08:21 AM /**

Staff **September 10, 2017**



During a [press briefing](#) held at Government House, St. Croix on Saturday, Governor Kenneth Mapp gave the following updates relative to Hurricane Irma relief efforts:

- FEMA has provided initial relief commodities to isolated St. John by air, as well as meals, water, and roof tarps on St. Thomas, with the assistance of the V.I. National Guard.
- V.I. Water and Power Authority has restored water service to St. Thomas.

- Inmates in detention on St. Thomas will be relocated off island today, to locations undisclosed due to security concerns.
- Evacuation of visitors continues early next week, with anticipated arrival of two ships of the Norwegian Caribbean Cruise Line and Royal Caribbean Cruise Line.
- Government services resume on St. Croix on Monday, September 11. Schools on St. Croix will open on Tuesday, September 12.
- Clients of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) are eligible for replacement food benefits if without power for 4 hours or more following Hurricane Irma. Others previously ineligible for SNAP benefits may now qualify for food assistance.
- FEMA confirms online process to apply for Individual Assistance under the Federal Disaster Declaration. To apply by telephone, call 1-800-621-3362 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. EST 7 days per week. Applications may be made online [here](#). Governor Mapp announced effort to make possible individual assistance via smartphone to reduce congestion at local offices to be opened.

Mapp on Security:

- Curfew violators admonished for hampering work to restore electricity and other recovery efforts. Three curfew violators have been arrested. Police Commissioner Delroy Richards warned of more arrests if violations continue.
- Businesses conducting operations during curfew may face consequence of being shuttered.
- Businesses are also warned against insurance fraud, for example: offering of merchandise 'giveaways' only to later claim looting for insurance purposes.
- Virgin Islands National Guard troops now actively patrolling with V.I. Police Officers in St. Thomas and assisting with commodities distribution.
- Following delay due to concern over weather conditions, a ship has arrived with needed commodities being off-loaded this evening.
- St. Croix's Henry E. Rohlsen airport is a major staging ground for personnel and relief commodities bound for the British Virgin Islands, which also suffered major hurricane damage. Mr. Mapp described it as an "honor" to be able to assist the British government's relief efforts.
- U.S. Congress applauded for approving \$15.8 billion to FEMA for combined recovery assistance.

Health

- FEMA Disaster Medical Assistance Team to establish a temporary hospital outside the Schneider Regional Medical Center.
- V.I. Department of Health nurses are being transported to relieve their counterparts on St. Thomas. Dialysis patients are being transferred to facilities in Puerto Rico.
- The Community Health Clinic is being relocated to the Knud Hansen Complex.
- The Department of Health is establishing a first aid clinic to relieve the still functioning Emergency Room at the Schneider Hospital.
- St. John patients are being transferred to St. Croix temporarily, pending long-term relocation with assistance from FEMA. Some St. John tourists are also moving to St. Croix in hopes of catching a flight out of the territory.

Charitable Assistance Warning

- Governor advises donors to avoid potentially fraudulent “GoFundMe” solicitations.
- Mr. Mapp announced the appointment of local attorney to establish special account to receive donations under management of the Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands (CFVI) on St. Thomas, and the St. Croix Foundation.
- Offers of donations of skills and labor to be evaluated and coordinated by VITEMA and FEMA.
- Mr. Mapp reiterated that recovery for St. Thomas and St. John will be a long and continuous process towards restoration.

Feature Image Credit: [Darryl Potter](#)

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