

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Trump Approves U.S. Virgin Islands Disaster Declaration Following Hurricane Maria

VIC News / **Published On September 22, 2017 09:16 AM /**

Staff **September 22, 2017**



President Donald Trump on Thursday declared that a major disaster exists in the territory of the U.S. Virgin Islands and ordered federal aid to supplement recovery efforts in the territory due to Hurricane Maria beginning on September 16 and continuing, according to a release issued by the White House.

The president's action makes federal funding available to affected individuals on the island of St. Croix.

Assistance can include grants for temporary housing and home repairs, low-cost loans to cover uninsured property losses, and other programs to help individuals and business

owners recover from the effects of the disaster, according to the release.

Federal funding is available to the territory and to certain private nonprofit organizations on a cost-sharing basis for emergency work in all of the islands in the territory.

Federal funding is also available on a cost-sharing basis for hazard mitigation measures throughout the territory.

Brock Long, administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Department of Homeland Security, named William L. Vogel as the federal coordinating officer for federal recovery operations in the affected areas, the release says.

Damage assessments are continuing in other areas, and additional areas and forms of assistance may be designated after the assessments are fully completed.

Residents and business owners who sustained losses in the designated areas can begin applying for assistance by registering online [here](#), or by calling 1-800-621-FEMA(3362) or 1-800-462-7585 (TTY) for the hearing and speech impaired. The toll-free telephone numbers will operate from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. (local time) seven days a week until further notice.