

The Virgin Islands Consortium

St. Croix Curfew Now 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 a.m.; V.I. National Guardsman Killed In St. Thomas; Over 860 Leave St. Croix On 'Mercy Cruise'

VIC News / **Published On September 29, 2017 11:40 PM /**

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ST. CROIX -- Governor Kenneth Mapp announced during his Friday press briefing a further easing of the curfews in the St. Croix and St. Thomas-St. John districts. For St. Croix, the curfew is now 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 a.m., meaning St. Croix residents have between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. daily to conduct their business. For the St. Thomas-St. John District, the curfew is now 6:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m.

Mr. Mapp announced that 866 people on St. Croix were accommodated on Royal Caribbean's Adventures of the Seas cruise ship today, as part of the government's

"mercy mission" voyages. The ship left the Frederiksted dock at 5:00 p.m. today and headed to St. Thomas, where it will accommodate more persons before making a two-day trip to Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Once there, mercy mission passengers are to make their own way.

In a press conference on Monday to be held in St. Thomas, Attorney General Claude Walker, along with the Medical Examiner's Office, will reveal for the first time the identity of those who died as a result of Hurricanes Irma and Maria. Mr. Mapp said the death toll, once said to be 7, had been reduced to 5, following autopsy results.

While the governor expressed sympathy to the families of those who died, he lauded residents' heeding of warnings to either prepare themselves or evacuate their homes, stating that the small number of deaths and trauma served as a testament to their preparation.

"I cannot say that it's five [deaths] in two hurricanes without saying that that's still -- for the kind of winds that went through the V.I. and the kinds of destruction that we suffered, to lose five souls and to not have a lot of trauma -- is amazing," Mr. Mapp said.

On a sad note, a Virgin Islands National Guard soldier was killed in St. Thomas on Thursday, according to Adjutant General Deborah Howell. The soldier, Private First Class Kyjuan Naughton, 21, was killed in the Smith Bay area while off duty. Private Naughton joined the V.I. National Guard in December 2014 and served honorably with the 661st Military Police Detachment, according to Adj. Gen. Howell. She relayed the news to Private Naughton's family on Thursday, and said that, "It is the most difficult charge as a commander to relay the news of losing a service member."

Private Naughton's death has been deemed a homicide, and the V.I.P.D. along with its federal partners are investigating the incident. The governor, along with William Vogel, federal coordinating officer of FEMA Region II and V.I.P.D. Commissioner Delroy Richards, expressed condolences to Private Naughton's family.

Below, find the other important updates from Mr. Mapp's Friday press briefing.

1. The Department of Planning and Natural will begin regulation of non-permitted generators and air pollution control where these generators are being used. Homes utilizing these non-permitted generators are allowed to operate from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. daily. Operation thereafter would be violation of law and persons found wanting will be subject to penalty. D.P.N.R. enforcement teams will be out in neighborhoods enforcing the regulation, according to Mr. Mapp.
2. Distribution Centers will open from 12 noon to 4:00 p.m. Saturday on St. Croix only.
3. The governor will host a joint press conference next week with cruise line CEOs to discuss the potential for cruise ships to resume visits to both St. Thomas and St. Croix.
4. The governor said weather forecasts predict thunderstorms and heavy rainfall in the territory through Sunday, and urged residents to take precautionary measures.
5. No more meals ready to eat (MREs) will be coming into the territory, the governor said, stressing his administration's efforts to move to the recovery stage following the two disasters. In light of this, distribution centers, beginning next week, will open four days a week for four hours a day.

6. The territory's leader stressed that displaced residents currently staying at shelters should not worry about being put out. He said while the government is aiming for an October 9 school reopening for the St. Thomas-St. John District, and will need the Lockhart Elementary School to accommodate students, housing would first be arranged for those in shelters.
7. The governor said the Blue Roof Project will kick off in a big way on Saturday, and promised to give more details during his Saturday briefing.
8. The University of the Virgin Islands suffered heavy damage to both of its campuses. Even so, the institution of higher learning said all of its facilities are expected to be cleaned, restored and ready for operations in two weeks – approximately Oct. 9. Some classes may resume even sooner, depending on the restoration of permanent power and internet communications. UVI will utilize some traditional classes, but also online courses. UVI will also utilize YouTube to upload lectures.
9. Department of Labor Commissioner Catherine Hendry announced that the Federal Disaster Unemployment Assistance (D.U.A.) has been extended to St. Thomas and St. John residents for Hurricane Irma. The D.U.A. applies to persons who have lost their jobs, live in St. Thomas and St. John, or have been displaced by Hurricane Irma. D.O.L.'s requirements for the D.U.A. requires that an individual does not qualify for regular unemployment benefits; individuals and small business owners who have lost incomes due to Hurricane Irma; individuals prevented from working due to an injury caused by the disaster; individuals who have become the sole supporter of the household due to a disaster-related death or injury of another family member; individuals who are unable to reach their places of employment because of the disaster.
10. D.O.L. offices in the St. Thomas-St. John are open on week days to process claims. These claims must be filed by Monday, October 30. D.O.L. is calling a meeting that all St. Croix employees are expected to attend on Monday, October 2 at the St. Croix Dept. of Labor at 11:00 a.m.
11. The V.I.P.D. will continue to enforcing the curfew, according to Mr. Richards. He said 6 persons -- among them a store owner and security officer -- were arrested on Thursday. The commissioner also noted a rise in domestic violence incidents.
12. Department of Health said it's formulating a plan to return medical evacuees to the territory, as the recovery process continues to take shape.
13. Disaster Survivor Assistance (DSA) teams will be offering registration services from 12 noon to 5:00 p.m. at the Old Post Office in Christiansted on Saturday.

Correction: Sept. 30, 2017

Because of a text error, a previous version of this article listed the hours of operation for non-permitted generators as 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. The correct hours are 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. The story has been updated.