

The Virgin Islands Consortium

WAPA Receives \$35 Million For Territory-Wide Restoration Effort; Curfews Eased Further; UVI Classes Resume Monday

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Governor Kenneth Mapp announced during his Wednesday press briefing that the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority today received \$35 million in federal disaster dollars to commence what is expected to be a major, territory-wide power restoration push from WAPA. The effort will include hundreds of linemen from around the U.S. mainland, with 240 workers being part of the first batch to arrive.

The linemen along with their equipment will start arriving tomorrow, the governor said, with work set to commence on October 13. The \$35 million is part of \$70 million the

governor has requested for power restoration and debris cleanup. The funds are not to be used for government operations, Mr. Mapp said.

The governor shrunk the curfews further; on St. Croix the curfew is now 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 a.m., meaning St. Croix residents now have between the hours of 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. to conduct business. For the St. Thomas-St. John District, the curfew is now 7:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m. Mr. Mapp said he would await advice from the V.I.P.D. commissioner, the V.I. National Guard adjutant general, the Department of Public Works commissioner and the Department of Planning and Natural Resources to determine whether the curfew could see further shrinkage by the weekend.

The University of the Virgin Islands will resume classes on Monday, according to UVI President David Hall. Mr. Hall said the institution's goal is to "save the semester," therefore, classes will be offered in a variety of options, including online, on weekends and "other means." UVI will ask its staff to be flexible and creative with students to help them achieve their goals. Mr. Hall said 10 minutes will be added to every class, and the semester will end on December 22, as compared to earlier in the month during previous fall semesters. Exams will be held during the first week of January, 2018. "We're trying to give students as much time as possible," Mr. Hall said.

Once students return to school on Monday, Mr. Hall acknowledged that many may have questions. In light of this, the university has installed hotlines located in student success centers on both campuses. The number for St. Thomas is 340-693-1583; for St. Croix's it's 340-692-4140.

UVI's new class schedule will be posted on its website late Thursday, according to Mr. Hall, and a note will be sent to every student to assure that they receive the information, as the president acknowledged that some students may not have access to emails.

There are units for students to reside in on the St. Thomas campus, even though 104 units were damaged by Hurricane Irma, according to Tamika Thomas Williams, UVI's public relations director. Previously, Mr. Hall had said the St. Thomas campus had no more units available for students to reside in. On St. Croix, for students willing to double up, some units were available as of Wednesday and interested persons should contact UVI's housing office to signup.

Below, find some more updates from today's press briefing:

1. Distribution centers will be closed on Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday, the governor said. He said, "We're pretty much down on inventory," and will begin the transition to the DSNAP program, which Mr. Mapp has said most Virgin Islands residents should qualify for.
2. The 2017-18 school year will end on July 12 in the St. Thomas-St. John District.
3. The Mapp administration and the VI/PR Friendship Committee will host a celebratory event commemorating the relationship between the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico on Monday.
4. The V.I.P.D. has stationed police officers at various intersections to aid with traffic.
5. D.P.N.R. will receive help from V.I.P.D. officers to enforce the non-permitted generator noise ordinance. Police officers will be given citation books for residents running their generators after the 10:00 p.m. cutoff time. Non-permitted generators

are allowed to run between 6:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. daily.

6. On Thursday, St. Croix will receive an army unit with 48 personnel to aid with the mobile hospital units to be stationed at the Juan F. Luis Hospital.
7. The Dept. of Health received 32 48x48 pallets of infant and toddler kits to be distributed. More information on distribution will be made available in an upcoming press briefing. Also at another press briefing, a robust plan on mosquito control will be announced, according to the governor.
8. The Denmark Emergency Management Agency has arrived in the territory, and has been so far working with the Department of Education. Reports on their efforts are expected in forthcoming press briefings.

Update: Oct. 10, 2017:

UVI has provided new information stating that the university's St. Thomas campus had units available for students to reside in as of Thursday.