

The Virgin Islands Consortium

WAPA Says its Hurricane Preparedness Effort is Ongoing; Authority Monitoring Developing System

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As part of its ongoing and year-round hurricane preparedness, the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority is closely monitoring the progress of Invest 92-L which is forecast to impact the local area later this week.

“A significant level of preparation has already been completed, from ensuring adequate levels of supplies to support a restoration effort to drawing on increased levels of fuel storage for our power plants, and water inventory to maintain potable water service during and immediately after any storm event that may impact the territory,” said Executive Director Lawrence J. Kupfer.

While WAPA is always hopeful that the territory will be spared from windstorms, other natural or man-made disasters, we assure our residents of the Authority's continued disaster preparedness effort as timely response, restoration, and rebuilding are key factors in maintaining the service the utility provides.

The Authority's hurricane preparedness spans the gamut from lining up additional manpower and equipment to ensuring supply contracts are in place and adequate inventories of basic electric and water system supplies are on hand for any restoration effort. "Just as every other response agency, WAPA is also facing the hurricane season amid the COVID-19 pandemic. "This will indeed present new challenges but WAPA remains committed to providing electrical and water service to the greatest extent possible before, during, and after any natural disaster our territory may face," Kupfer said.

"The most important message we can convey to our residents today is that should a disaster strike the territory, downed power lines and poles should not be cut or moved. All electrical equipment should be treated as fully energized and not tampered with. Instead, please notify our 24-hour dispatch centers at 340-774-3552 or 340-773-2250, select option 4 to report the downed or damaged equipment. These numbers may also be used to report service interruptions.

Customers are encouraged to tune into local media outlets: radio, television, and social media to stay informed about developments involving WAPA's operations. Before, during, and after a storm event, WAPA will update the public regularly about the levels of service the company will provide during any disaster event.

The Authority's website is a critical hub for general information about WAPA and is also an online payment portal. Real time updates are also posted to WAPA's Facebook page (Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority) and Twitter account (@VIWAPA). Additionally, the public is encouraged to sign up for WAPA Alerts, a free messaging service the Authority provides to update customers via text messaging or email notification. Sign up today on the WAPA website and stay connected. Updated information is also provided via the WAPA telephone system. Dial 340-774-3552 or 340-773-2250, select option 6.

"I encourage our employees and our customers to take time now to finalize their preparedness efforts as we approach the peak of the 2020 Atlantic Hurricane Season. Take a moment to make certain that you have supplies, such as drinking water and non-perishable food items for you and your family for at least ten days. Just as important is that every family have a communications plan and know what to do should a storm or other disaster befall the territory. Let us continue to prepare and remain safe," Kupfer said.