

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Tropical Storm Kirk Strengthens; USVI, Other Lesser Antilles Islands Urged To Monitor Storm's Path

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Tropical Storm Kirk gained strength on Wednesday and could potentially see some additional strengthening in the coming hours, according to the National Hurricane Center's 5:00 p.m. advisory.

A tropical storm warning is now in effect for Barbados, Dominica, St. Lucia, Martinique and Guadeloupe. A tropical storm watch is in effect for St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

N.H.C. said interests elsewhere in the central and northern Lesser Antilles, which includes the U.S. Virgin Islands, should monitor the progress of Kirk as additional warnings or watches could be issued tonight.

Virgin Islands Territorial Emergency Management Agency Director Mona Barnes said the agency has been monitoring the storm. "My staff and I are working closely with our partners at the National Weather Service located in San Juan, PR to ensure we receive real-time updates on the progress of Tropical Storm Kirk," Ms. Barnes said. "We are still in the peak of the 2018 hurricane season, Virgin Islanders must continue to remain vigilant and prepared. VITEMA will continue to track Tropical Storm Kirk's progress and provide regular updates."

According to N.H.C.'s 5:00 p.m. advisory, the center of Tropical Storm Kirk was located near latitude 12.7 North, longitude 55.7 West. Kirk is moving toward the west-northwest near 18 mph (30 km/h), and this motion is expected to continue over the next few days. On the forecast track, the center of Kirk will move over the Lesser Antilles within the Tropical Storm Warning area Thursday afternoon.



Maximum sustained winds are near 60 mph (95 km/h) with higher gusts. Little change in strength is forecast until Kirk crosses the Lesser Antilles, followed by weakening over the eastern Caribbean Sea.

Tropical-storm-force winds extend outward up to 115 miles (185 km) from the center. The estimated minimum central pressure is 998 mb (29.47 inches).

Hazards affecting land

Wind: Tropical storm conditions are expected to first reach the warning area by Thursday afternoon, making outside preparations difficult or dangerous. Tropical storm conditions are possible within the watch area by Thursday afternoon.

Rain: Kirk is expected to produce total rainfall of 4 to 6 inches across the northern Windward and southern Leeward Islands with isolated maximum totals up to 10 inches across Martinique and Dominica. These rains may produce life-threatening flash floods and mudslides.