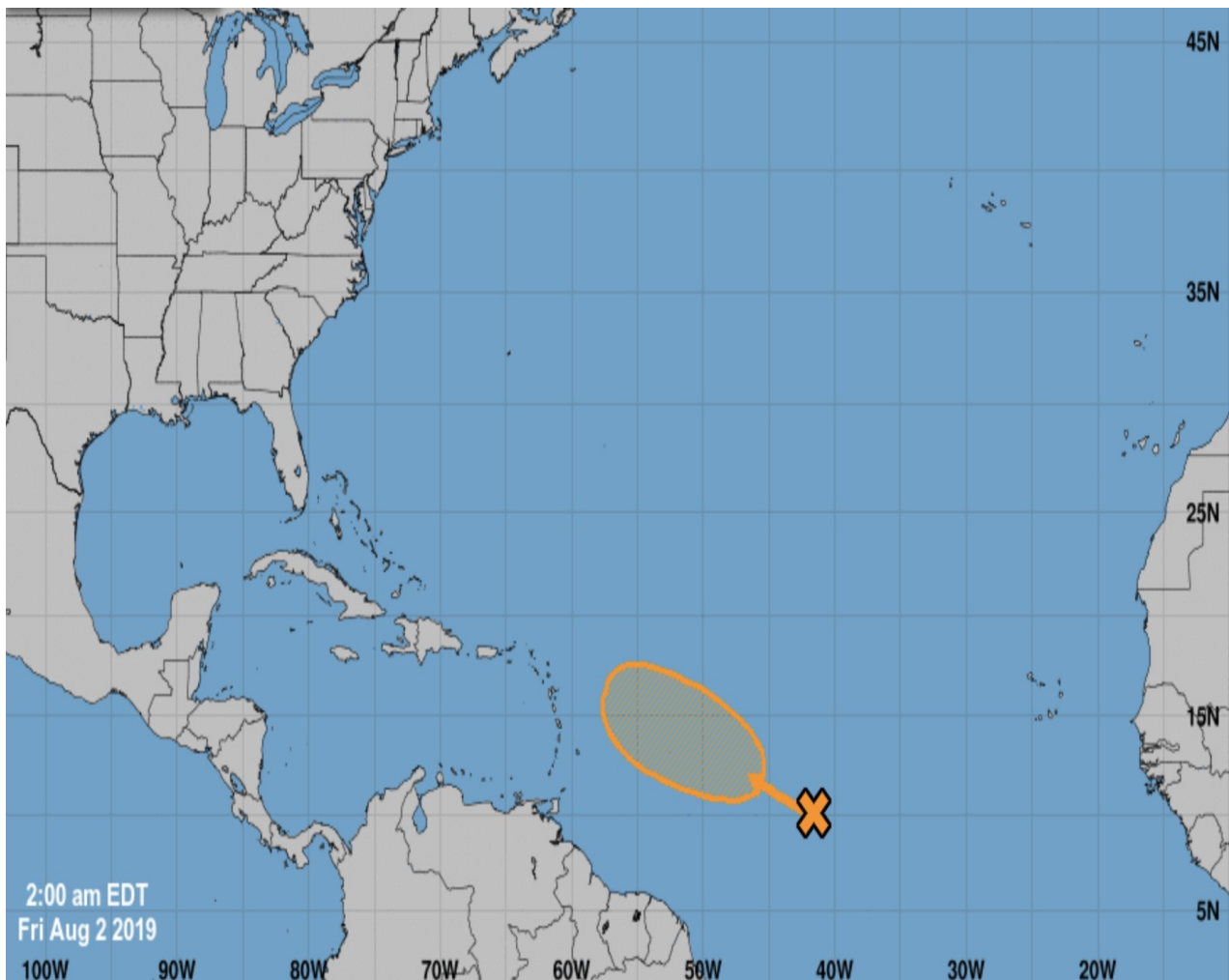


The Virgin Islands Consortium

VITEMA Monitoring System Projected To Strengthen Over Weekend, Advises Residents To Be Prepared

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The Virgin Islands Territorial Emergency Management Agency (VITEMA) said Thursday that it's closely monitoring the progress of a low-pressure system producing a large area of disorganized showers and thunderstorms in the Atlantic Ocean.

The system, called Invest 96L, was located about midway between the Cabo Verde Islands and the Lesser Antilles while moving west-southwest at 10 to 15 mph, the National Weather Service said. N.W.S. added that environmental conditions could become more supportive by Saturday, and a tropical depression is likely to form over the weekend several hundred miles east of the Lesser Antilles.

There are, however, uncertainties with the future intensity and track of the system, N.W.S. said.

Further development of Invest 96L on its current path could bring additional rainfall to the territory, VITEMA said.

"My staff and I are continuing to work closely with our partners at NWS - San Juan, to ensure we receive real-time updates on the progress and track of the system," said VITEMA Director Daryl D. Jaschen. "The territory stands prepared to ensure all resources will be utilized in response to Invest 96L. "

VITEMA said it continues to coordinate the territory's preparedness with local and federal partners.

Residents are also advised to:

- Remain indoors unless truly necessary and be ready for quick action if a Flood Watch or Flood Warning is issued. A Flood Watch is issued when conditions are favorable for flooding. It does not mean flooding will occur, but it is possible. A Flash Flood Warning is issued when a flash flood is imminent or occurring. If you are in a flood prone area move immediately to high ground.
- Avoid flood-prone areas and be careful when approaching roadway dips. The heavy rain could also cause mudslides in areas of steep terrain.
- Test and update your family disaster plan to ensure it addresses the needs of everyone in the home including children, pets and persons with access and functional needs.
- Prepare your emergency supply kits and ensure they include enough essential items for a minimum of 10 days. We recommend including items such as water for drinking and sanitation purposes, nonperishable foods, first-aid kit, medication, battery operated radio, pet food and games for children.
- Service and test household generators. Assess your generator readiness to operate for extended periods of useage. Never use a generator, grill, camp stove or other gasoline, propane, natural gas or charcoal-burning devices inside a home, or any partially enclosed area. Keep these devices outdoors, away from doors, windows and vents that could allow carbon monoxide to come indoors.
- Stay informed about weather systems that may impact the USVI using credible sources of information. Closely monitor radio stations and receive real-time updates on Alert VI, the territory's emergency notification system. You can register for Alert VI by visiting the VITEMA website at www.vitema.vi.gov.

"The Region II Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Incident Management Assistance Team (IMAT) are currently on ground in the territory supporting the Multi-Agency Hurricane Preparedness Walkthrough and Tabletop Exercise," said Mr. Jaschen. "The team will remain in the territory as we prepare for Invest 96L, poised to support the people of the Virgin Islands as needed."