

The Virgin Islands Consortium

WAPA Says It's Ready To Restore Service If Necessary After Tropical Storm Dorian Passes

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With the U.S. Virgin Islands [being placed under a tropical storm warning](#) as of 5:00 p.m. Tuesday, Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority Executive Director Lawrence J. Kupfer moved to reassure the community of WAPA's general state of readiness for any impact from Tropical Storm Dorian.

Mr. Kupfer said WAPA's management team has been monitoring the storm since the weekend.

"Coordination is in place, and resources are readily available for damage assessment, and any required restoration efforts," Mr. Kupfer said. Contractors presently on St. Croix

are capable of performing damage assessment, and emergency restoration work through the use of 56 line workers. Preparations are in place to shift additional manpower from St. Thomas to St. Croix to commence initial restoration work if it becomes necessary."

WAPA said its goal is to restore critical government facilities within 24 hours of the storm, including hospitals, airports, seaports, VITEMA, and the emergency response agencies. Most of those are provided electrical service through underground circuits.

Within 24 hours of damage assessment, the authority said it will be best-positioned to determine if additional outside help is needed for restoration of service. WAPA said it has pre-staged arrangements to mobilize mutual aid assistance if needed, consignment agreements for material sourcing, emergency housing, and staging areas for debris collection.

In addition, Mr. Kupfer said, WAPA has taken stock of the fuel supply for its power plants as well as water storage capabilities in both districts. "In terms of fuel, we have approximately 12.5 days of propane fuel, a 14-day supply of No. 2 oil and 6,000 gallons of diesel and gasoline to support our vehicle fleet. Water storage on St. Croix is approximately 13.4 million gallons or water supply for four and a half days. Once it is safe to resume the operations of our seawater reverse osmosis units, we will do so," he said.

USVI now under tropical storm warning

The U.S. Virgin Islands has been placed on a tropical storm warning as Tropical Storm Dorian approaches the southern Leeward Islands. According to the National Hurricane Center's 5:00 p.m. advisory, the USVI and Puerto Rico are expected to experience tropical storm conditions on Wednesday, with hurricane conditions possible in Puerto Rico and portions of the Dominican Republic Thursday.

A tropical storm warning means that tropical storm conditions are expected somewhere within the warning area within 36 hours.

A Tropical Storm Warning is in effect for:

- Puerto Rico
- Vieques
- Culebra
- U.S. Virgin Islands
- Dominican Republic from Isla Saona to Samana

Discussion and Outlook

According to N.H.C. data from the Guadeloupe radar indicate that the center of Tropical Storm Dorian was located near latitude 15.3 North, longitude 62.5 West. Dorian is moving toward the west-northwest near 13 mph (20 km/h), and this motion is expected to continue through tonight, followed by a turn toward the northwest on Wednesday. On the forecast track, the center of Dorian will move across the northeastern Caribbean Sea tonight, pass over or near western and central Puerto Rico on Wednesday, and move near or just east of eastern Hispaniola Wednesday night. On Thursday night and Friday, the center of Dorian is forecast to move near or to the east of the Turks and Caicos and the southeastern Bahamas.

Maximum sustained winds remain near 50 mph (85 km/h) with higher gusts. Slow strengthening is forecast during the next 24 hours, and Dorian is forecast to be near hurricane strength when it approaches Puerto Rico on Wednesday. Some weakening is expected after Dorian moves across the higher terrain of Puerto Rico Wednesday night. Dorian is expected to gradually re-strengthen on Thursday and Friday while passing near or to the east of the Turks and Caicos and southeastern Bahamas.

Tropical-storm-force winds extend outward up to 45 miles (75 km) from the center. The estimated minimum central pressure is 1005 mb (29.68 inches).

Lieutenant Governor Tregenza Roach urging residents to be prepared

“As we approach September, the most active month of the hurricane season for the Virgin Islands, I encourage residents to stay vigilant and not delay preparations,” Mr. Roach said in his capacity of commissioner of insurance.

He also encouraged residents who have insurance to review their policy.

“Whether you have a mortgage or own your home, homeowners should have insurance and understand what is covered by the policy. An annual review of the policy is important. Be sure to contact your insurance agent directly to discuss any need for additional coverage,” he said.

In order to be prepared before a hurricane, the following actions should be taken by property owners, according to Mr. Roach: