

The Virgin Islands Consortium

St. Thomas Whiplashed By Cat. 1 Dorian; One Death Reported In St. John; White House Declares Federal State Of Emergency For USVI; St. Croix Spared

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Update 1: Following the publishing of this story, V.I.P.D. Public Information Officer Glen Dratte said the person who died during Hurricane Dorian in St. John was an 82-year-old woman who had a variety of health challenges.

Original Story: Dorian took a hard turn from its projected path Wednesday -- a potential the National Hurricane Center throughout its advisories cautioned. It bypassed St. Croix

and stormed ashore in the St. Thomas-St. John district as a Category 1 hurricane, dropping trees, poles and rooftops in its wake.

First responders and emergency management teams are still assessing damage caused by maximum sustained winds of 82 mph and 111 mph gusts.

The V.I. Police investigators are trying to determine how an elder woman on St. John died during the storm. Authorities cannot say, for sure, if her death was storm-related, said Daryl Jaschen, director of the Virgin Islands Emergency Management Agency (VITEMA). Her name has not been released.

Dorian was a tropical storm headed on west-northwest trajectory at a steady 13 mph when it swerved north. By 12:30 Wednesday afternoon, increasingly powerful winds blew past St. Croix on a beeline for the rest of the territory.

"No one really expected the storm to turn," Gov. Albert Bryan Jr. said during the administration's Wednesday evening post-mortem of Dorian's landfall well north of St. Croix. After a northerly turn, "Dorian became a hurricane rather quickly," the governor said.

Days leading up to the storm, the Consortium closely followed the N.H.C.'s advisories, and while N.H.C. had forecast the storm to hold west-northwest, it constantly warned that interests in the U.S. Virgin Islands should monitor its path -- meaning there was always the possibility of a change in direction. Stories [here](#) and [here](#).

Four to six inches of rain fell across the territory, with up to eight inches falling in some isolated areas, said Mr. Jaschen.

St. Croix: Spared the Worst

Heavy rains and sporadic power outages marked much of the day on St. Croix, but it was spared the worst. The department of Public Works cleared the roads between Christiansted and Frederiksted by late evening. The empty evacuation shelter was expected to officially close the doors by noon Thursday. And government employees were asked to return to their normal work schedules Thursday morning.

St. Thomas: An Unexpected Landfall

On St. Thomas people took to social media to provide images and first-hand testimonials. Lisa Donovan posted video, with narration. "This is up by me. This is not what nobody here expected," she said. "This is my view of Dorian from my front door. ... Crazy, crazy, crazy."

The bulk of local and federal first responders were staged on St. Croix. Instead " ... We watched the eye wall (of the hurricane) form just off the coast of St. Thomas," Mr. Bryan said.

Government employees in St. Thomas were expected to report to work at 10:00 a.m.

St. John: Damage Assessment to Come

An elderly woman passed away during the storm, and a police department investigation is underway.

Beyond that, not a lot more was known Wednesday evening about the impact of Hurricane Dorian on St. John.

The entire island remained without power throughout the day. With the storm's passage, government employees were expected to report to work at 10 a.m.

Washington DC

The White House has declared a federal State of Emergency for the territory. That means, among other things, that the territory can take advantage of certain measures to seek federal funding.

"This State of Emergency helps enable government officials to take extra measures," said Congresswoman Stacey Plaskett.

WAPA

Sporadic outages continued throughout the night on St. Thomas. Where on St. John power was restored remained unclear on Wednesday night.

In areas of the west and north sides of St. Thomas, power was spotty or non-existent through early evening. "Six of nine feeders are up and running" Mr. Bryan said. "St. John has no power yet (as of 7:30 p.m.)"

Airport

According to the V.I. Port Authority

- The Cyril E. King Airport on St. Thomas will reopen at 7:00 a.m. Thursday
- The Henry E. Rohlsen Airport on St. Croix did not close and is operating as normal. It will also be open tomorrow.
- The U.S. Coast Guard will complete its safety assessments of the seaports and make an announcement as to when they will reopen.