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Canary Islands Volcano, Saharan Dust Causing Hazy Skies In USVI and Keeping Storms Away

Community Center / **Published On October 08, 2021 03:00 PM /**

Staff Consortium **October 08, 2021**

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Haziness over St. Thomas on Friday, Oct. 8, 2021 By. VI CONSORTIUM

Go outside and look up wherever you are today in the U.S. Virgin Islands, and you will most likely witness haziness in the sky. That's a result of dry air over the Atlantic mixed with a heavy influx of Saharan dust. Also contributing is the La Palma Volcano on the Canary Islands off northwestern Africa, which has been erupting for the past two weeks and a half. Nearly a thousand houses in La Palma have been completely destroyed by the volcanic activity, according to media reports.

Satellite photos show the Saharan Air Layer moving across the region and a tropical wave crossing south of Puerto Rico. The suspended dust particles are causing hazing skies with lower

than normal visibility, between 6-9 miles. Limited showers are forecast. The drier pattern will continue through the weekend. By Monday, a vigorous tropical wave could bring increased shower activity to the local area.

The event has even caused some aircraft to circle multiple times around the Cyril E. Airport before landing because of poor visibility.

Even so, the haziness and African dust are inhibiting storm development, and there are currently no systems coming off the coast of Africa as we head into the final stretch of the 2021 Hurricane Season.

On the marine side of things, expect tranquil conditions with light to moderate easterly winds. Across the territory's waters, expect seas levels to swell to about 5 feet.

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