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VITEMA to Residents: Know Your Tsunami Zone and Be Prepared. Tsunami Evacuation Maps Released.

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Robert Moore **January 15, 2020**

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Tsunami Evacuation Map By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS TERRITORIAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

Some of the most popular and populated areas in the territory are at the highest risk on the off-chance tremblors that continue to rattle off the southern coast of Puerto Rico should a tsunami spawn.

Evacuation maps produced by the Virgin Islands Territorial Emergency Management Agency (VITEMA) show the V.I.'s airports, bustling seaside towns — Charlotte Amalie, Christiansted, Cruz Bay, Coral Bay, Frederiksted — are squarely within the evacuation zone. And so are the most popular beaches, campgrounds, resorts and hotels.

VITEMA is regularly reminding residents to stay informed of emergencies impacting the territory — and be prepared to act quickly, wherever you are. But its even more critical to respond immediately if you are in a tsunami evacuation zone.

"Know your zone," VITEMA public affairs officer Garry Green said in an agency press release Tuesday. "A key step in being prepared is to find out if your home, school, workplace or other frequently visited places are in a tsunami hazard or evacuation zone..."

Tsunami zone and safe zones maps for St. Croix, St. Thomas, St. John and Water Island can be downloaded [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#) respectively.

Keep in mind that the areas shaded in yellow are considered tsunami zones and areas in green are considered safe zones. The maps also identify Assembly Points throughout the territory for residents to gather for information following a tsunami.

Virgin Islanders are also urged to make sure their mobile phones have the Government Alerts settings turned on to ensure they receive emergency, public safety and AMBER alerts. Instructions for turning on the notifications can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

The territory has been spared any significant impact from seismic activity close to Puerto Rico. But the earthquakes are occurring regularly. Since 2 a.m. Tuesday morning, 15 light earthquakes with recorded magnitudes of 2.1 to 4.6 struck just off the southern P.R. coast, according to the Puerto Rico Seismic Network, a project of the University of Puerto Rico at Mayaguez.

VITEMA issued the following tips:

- Stay informed of emergencies impacting the territory by registering for Alert VI at www.vitema.vi.gov today. In addition to local radio station call-ins and visits, we continue to use the following resources to provide emergency preparedness and response information. Feel free to visit, like, follow and share information posted on:
 - The Agency's website www.vitema.vi.gov
 - Facebook at "VITEMA"
 - Instagram at "vitema_usvi"
 - Twitter at "readyusvi"
- Secure heavy items in your home like bookcases, refrigerators, televisions, and objects that hang on walls. Store heavy and breakable objects on low shelves.
- Create a family emergency communication plan and ensure everyone in your household knows where to meet if you get separated. Share emergency plans with your neighbors and combine plans whenever possible.
- Practice "drop, cover, and hold-on" earthquake response procedures with all family members.
 - **Drop:** Drop wherever you are on to your hands and knees. If you're using a wheelchair or walker with a seat, make sure your wheels are locked and remain seated until the shaking stops.
 - **Cover:** Cover your head and neck with your arms. If a sturdy table or desk is nearby, crawl underneath it for shelter.
 - **Hold on:** If you are under a table or desk, hold on with one hand and be ready to move with it if it moves.
- Prepare a supply kit that includes enough food and water for at least 10 days. Consider each person's specific needs, including medication. Store critical documents in a watertight container. Have extra batteries and charging devices for phones and other critical equipment. Do not forget the needs of pets.

- Consider obtaining an earthquake insurance policy. A standard homeowner's insurance policy does not cover earthquake damage.
- Know your zone. A key step in being prepared is to find out if your home, school, workplace or other frequently visited places are in a tsunami hazard or evacuation zone; the attached maps are provided for your use. **NOTE** – Areas in **yellow** are considered the tsunami zone. Areas in **green** are considered the safe zone.
- Ensure the “Emergency Alert” feature on your cellular device is activated (see attached instructions for Android and iPhone devices) and your phone is fully charged at all times. Take a moment to look at your settings to ensure that all national and local alerts can be received in a time of an emergency.
- Learn about FEMA's Integrated Public Alert & Warning System (IPAWS) video: <https://youtu.be/ptk5Oi3P2to>

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