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Tropical Storm Franklin Brings Heavy Rains and Strong Winds to U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico

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Tropical Storm Franklin's path as of Monday, Aug. 21, 2023. By. NATIONAL HURRICANE CENTER

The U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico are facing heavy rains and gusty winds as the outer bands of Tropical Storm Franklin sweep across the region. The National Weather Service in San Juan issued an update on Sunday, August 20, 2023, at 8:37 p.m., warning residents about the potential for flooding and other weather-related hazards.

A Tropical Storm Warning is in effect for the Dominican Republic's entire south coast from Haiti border eastward to Isla Saona. A warning is also in effect for Haiti's entire south coast from Anse d'Hainault eastward to the Dominican Republic border.

Weather Impact

The storm has already generated rainfall totals of 1-3 inches in various parts of the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico, with maximum wind gusts ranging between 40-50 mph. In St. Croix, a peak gust of 47 mph was reported. Despite the adverse weather conditions, daytime temperatures soared into the upper 80s to mid 90s, with heat index values reaching up to 110 degrees.

Forecast

The National Weather Service expects additional rainbands from Tropical Storm Franklin to continue impacting the U.S. Virgin Islands and eastern and southern Puerto Rico. An increased risk of flooding will persist into Tuesday as scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms spread across the local islands. Residents are advised to be cautious of ponding water on roadways, poorly drained areas, and the potential for flash floods and mudslides.

Marine Conditions

Marine conditions are also hazardous, with steady seas ranging between 3 and 6 feet. Small Craft Advisories are in effect for most local waters through Tuesday evening, and there is a high risk of rip currents for beaches in southeastern Puerto Rico and St. Croix.

Ongoing monitoring

As the situation evolves, the National Weather Service urges residents and visitors to stay updated on the latest forecasts. The highest impact is expected across the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico, particularly in eastern and southern regions.

In a broader initiative to prepare for such events, local authorities continue to monitor updates from the National Hurricane Center and the San Juan Weather Forecast Office.

Longterm outlook

Although Tropical Storm Franklin is one of the main weather features in the short term, model guidance suggests a wet and unsettled pattern will linger in the area through Wednesday, possibly extending into Thursday. Authorities are also warning of a moderate to high potential for flash flooding and urban and small stream flooding.

Residents are encouraged to stay alert and continue monitoring updates as the storm progresses.