

FEMA Offers Tips on How to Rebuild Stronger Homes at the Crucian Coconut Festival

Release Date: décembre 1, 2017

ST. CROIX, Virgin Islands – Virgin Island survivors who are cleaning up and rebuilding after hurricanes Irma and Maria can receive free advice at a local festival in St. Croix this Sunday, Dec. 3 on making their homes more resilient against future disasters.

Hazard Mitigation Specialists from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will have a table at the Crucian Coconut Festival from **11 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the Bethlehem Sugar Factory**, across from the Army National Guard, in Estate Bethlehem, in St. Croix.

FEMA specialists will be available to offer tips and techniques and free publications about cleaning up mold and mildew from flooded homes as well as building hazard-resistant homes. Most of the tips and publications provided at the information stations are geared for do-it-yourself homeowners and general contractors. Some of the information will include how to protect homes against high winds by securing roofs and siding and using special hardware connectors and brackets when framing to make structures stronger, and safer.

“We encourage hurricane survivors to check in with our specialists,” said Federal Coordinating Officer William Vogel. “Survivors who take advantage of the consultations may walk away with some excellent project ideas.”

*Disaster recovery assistance is available without regard to race, color, religion, nationality, sex, age, disability, English proficiency or economic status. If you or someone you know has been discriminated against, call FEMA toll-free at **800-621-3362** (voice, **711/VRS** - Video Relay Service) (TTY: **800-462-7585**). Multilingual operators are available (press 2 for Spanish).*



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FEMA's mission is to support our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards.

For official information on the recovery effort following the hurricanes, please visit www.informusvi.com or www.usviupdate.com. Follow us on social media at twitter.com/femaregion2 and www.facebook.com/FEMAUSVirginIslands.

*To donate or volunteer, contact the voluntary or charitable organization of your choice through the National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD) at www.nvoad.org. For those who wish to help, **cash** donations offer voluntary agencies the most flexibility in obtaining the most-needed resources and pumps money into the local economy to help businesses recover. The Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands also has the "Fund for the Virgin Islands" at www.USVIrecovery.org.*



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