

Progress Made in Disposal Operations for Hurricane Debris

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U.S. Virgin Islands – Hurricanes Irma and Maria left behind 580,000 cubic yards of debris in the U.S. Virgin Islands, enough to fill 177 Olympic size swimming pools. All eligible debris has been collected and significant progress is being made toward the goal of shipping it away from the territory.

“Debris collection, processing and disposal are signs of progress after a hurricane, not to mention two major hurricanes in a two week period,” said FEMA Federal Coordinating Officer William L. Vogel. “FEMA has worked with the Virgin Islands government to assure management of this debris is in compliance with all necessary federal and territorial laws and regulations. We’ve come a long way, and we’re looking forward to the completion of hurricane debris disposal during the next few months.”

More than 194,000 cubic yards of vegetative and construction debris from St. Thomas and St. John is temporarily staged at the Cancryn site on St. Thomas. It was collected, sorted and reduced to a relatively uniform size. Barging of debris from the site is anticipated to begin in August.

On St. Croix, more than 385,000 cubic yards of debris has been collected and is temporarily staged at Body Slob. It is expected that sorting, reduction and permitting will be completed in time to begin barging away this fall.

Disaster officials are assuring the public that hurricane debris at the two staging areas is being **responsibly managed and monitored to reduce risks to the environment and to public health**. To prevent spontaneous combustion, vegetative debris must be regularly turned and cooled. Otherwise, it poses a serious risk of starting a fire that could spread. No debris is being burned or composted.

Residents should also be aware that debris removal across the territory may involve slow-moving trucks carrying uncovered loads. Motorists and pedestrians



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should allow plenty of room for crews to operate.

Recovery officials ask Virgin Islanders for their patience as the process for debris disposal is completed. Questions about debris disposal may be emailed to FEMA-STT-Debris-Site@fema.dhs.gov.

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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 find out more about the Virgin Islands Territorial Emergency Management Agency, go to <http://www.vitema.vi.gov/>. To sign up for emergency, weather related, public safety and service disruption alerts on the Virgin Islands, sign up for [Alert VI](#) or copy <https://member.everbridge.net/index/892807736729008#/login> into your browser.

To donate or volunteer, contact the voluntary or charitable organization of your choice through the National Voluntary Agencies Active in Disasters (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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