

Get Ready NOW: Hurricane Season Starts Today

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ST. CROIX, U.S. Virgin Islands – As hurricane season officially begins today, it is crucial for residents to prepare themselves and their families for potential storms. While the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) predicts a near-normal hurricane season this year, with the potential for 12-17 named storms, it only takes one storm to disrupt the lives of individuals, families, and businesses.

FEMA urges residents to take the necessary precautions, including gathering emergency supplies, securing their homes, and having a plan in place for sheltering if necessary. It is also important to stay informed about the latest weather updates and sheltering orders issued by the Virgin Islands Territorial Emergency Management Agency (VITEMA).

"Preparation is key when it comes to hurricane season," said David Warrington, FEMA Region 2 Administrator. "We encourage residents to take the necessary steps now, before a storm hits, to ensure their safety and the safety of their loved ones."

Emergency supply kits should include items such as non-perishable food, water, batteries, flashlights, first-aid supplies, and any necessary medications. Residents should also secure their homes by trimming trees and branches, securing loose items such as outdoor furniture and toys, and reinforcing doors and windows.

Take these simple steps now to be better prepared for Atlantic hurricane season through actions that have little to no cost.

- Create your emergency communications plan. Use this [template](#) to record important contact and medical information about your family. You could share the template with others and store copies both digitally and on paper.



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- Store important phone numbers somewhere just besides your cellphone.
- Sign up for [Alert VI](#) from VITEMA to receive real-time emergency information for up to five addresses within the U.S. Virgin Islands. Have an emergency charging option for your phone and other mobile devices. Check the settings on your mobile device to receive wireless emergency alerts.
- Download the [FEMA App](#) (available in English and Spanish) to receive weather alerts, safety tips and reminders and be ready for the unexpected.
- Build your [emergency supply kit](#) over time. Start with items you may already have in your home, such as a flashlight, extra batteries, copies of important documents, water and nonperishable food. When you go to the grocery store, you can pick up an extra item each time that you use regularly.
- Store important documents and items such as passports, birth certificates, maps and electronics in a flood-safe place like a high shelf in resealable water-tight plastic bags to help waterproof them. Store [important documents](#) such as insurance policies digitally.
- Visit [Floodsmart.gov](#) to know your area's level of flood risk.
- Download free [preparedness resources](#).

"By taking these simple steps, residents can help ensure their safety and the safety of their families during hurricane season," said Mark A. Walters, Coordinator for FEMA's Virgin Islands Caribbean Area Office. "FEMA is ready to support the territory if called upon this hurricane season. We ask Virgin Islands' residents to stay ready, informed and alert during the season and throughout the year."

For more about emergency preparedness, visit [ready.gov](#), or VITEMA's website [vitema.vi.gov](#) .

