

Coordinated Efforts Underway to Meet Survivor Needs and Restore Basic Services in Virgin Islands

Release Date: 9? 14, 2017

St. Croix, Virgin Islands – The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is coordinating a major federal effort in the U.S. Virgin Islands (USVI) to rush much-needed care and commodities to Hurricane Irma survivors while supporting the restoration of basic services.

One week since Hurricane Irma tore through the Virgin Islands, FEMA continues to work with the federal family, as well as territorial, local, private sector and voluntary agency partners, to respond to immediate survivor needs while jumpstarting the longer-term recovery effort.

“We know survivors are having a very tough time right now, but we want to assure them that FEMA, along with the entire federal family, is working tirelessly to help meet their needs,” said Federal Coordinating Officer William Vogel. “Recovery will require all of us, survivors included, working together.”

As of today, FEMA has sent more than 582,000 meals and 380,000 liters of water to the USVI for the response effort. These basic commodities, along with cots, diapers, baby formula, temporary roofing materials and other necessities, are going to local Points of Distribution in St. John and St. Thomas and to shelters operated by our recovery partner the American Red Cross and others. Additional commodities are arriving on a daily basis.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) and the Departments of Defense (DoD), and Health and Human Services (HHS) are some of the federal agencies participating in the massive federal effort to assist the Virgin Islands and its people.

Generators have arrived in St. Thomas for installation in St. Thomas and St. John critical facilities, including shelters, hospitals, emergency service buildings and



water treatment plants. USACE has deployed a Power Planning and Response Team to assist with assessments and generator installations in these critical facilities.

The Coast Guard cutter fleet from Sector San Juan, along with other Coast Guard cutters, are supporting Hurricane Irma relief efforts by providing maritime security, assisting with port assessments, as well as transporting supplies, equipment, Coast Guard teams and other government agency responders to St. John and St. Thomas. USCG is also working with Virgin Island and federal responders on coordinating the transportation of people who need to be evacuated from the island.

For the first time in history HHS medical personnel were embedded with DoD search and rescue teams to evacuate dialysis patients requiring treatment from USVI. Additional HHS personnel are providing medical assistance at hospitals in St. Thomas and St. John. In all, approximately 10,000 DoD and 100 HHS personnel are supporting response operations in the USVI and Puerto Rico.

The September 7 presidential disaster declaration for the Virgin Islands makes federal assistance available to eligible homeowners, renters and business owners affected by Hurricane Irma in St. John and St. Thomas.

Survivors who sustained uninsured or underinsured Irma-related damage to their homes, vehicles, personal property, business or its inventory beginning Sept. 6, 2017, and continuing should register for assistance.

Registration can be completed online at www.DisasterAssistance.gov, in Spanish at www.DisasterAssistance.gov/es, or by phone at **1-800-621-3362** or **(TTY) 1-800-462-7585**. Those who use 711-Relay or Video Relay Services may call 1-800-621-3362.

The toll-free telephone numbers operate from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. seven days a week (local time) until further notice. Operators are standing by to assist survivors in English, Spanish and many other languages.

