

Review Your Plan, Prepare Now Before Hurricane Season Starts

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ST. CROIX, U.S. Virgin Islands — Now is the time to prepare yourself and your household for the upcoming Atlantic hurricane season. During Hurricane Preparedness Week, assess your personal risk, update your family's emergency communications plan, start to replenish your emergency kit, and review your personal and financial documents.

Hurricane season runs from June 1 to November 30, but the time to prepare is now when you are not under pressure as storms form in the Atlantic. If you wait until a hurricane is approaching, the odds are that you will be under duress and might not make the best decision.

FEMA and its partners in the U.S. Virgin Islands will conduct a series of response exercises in the coming months to ensure we are ready to support a response to a storm, at the territory's request. The best way to help your community recover from a disaster is by taking steps now to prepare yourself and your family before a disaster happens. Each of us can take steps to make sure we're prepared for any disaster.

"FEMA's partnership with the U.S. Virgin Islands on strengthening response focus areas to prepare for storms continues to flourish and we are ready for the Atlantic hurricane season," said Virgin Islands Caribbean Area Office Coordinator Mark A. Walters. "We are asking Virgin Islanders to stay informed, be ready and vigilant during hurricane season. It only takes one hurricane to change your life and your community," said Walters.

According to VITEMA Director Daryl Jaschen, "Time is a very precious commodity and one we can never get back. We owe it to ourselves, our families, our friends, and our business partners to use this time before hurricane season, wisely. Having a written and shared hurricane plan for 2023 not only provides comfort, but it also guides us in the final hours before landfall and assists in surviving the days that follow."



As you prepare, tailor your plans and supplies to your specific daily living needs and responsibilities. Discuss your needs and responsibilities and how people in the network can assist each other with communication, care of children, business, pets or specific needs such as operating medical equipment.

- Make sure everyone in your household knows and understands your hurricane plan.
- Identify any additional help needed in an emergency if you or anybody in your home is senior or has a disability, access, or functional requirement. The [V.I. Department of Human Services](#)' Elder, Dependent Adult, and Disabled Persons Disaster Registry is open to Virgin Islanders aged 60 and over, as well as those with disabilities.
 - To register, call 340-774-0930 ext. 4018 on St. Thomas, 340-776-6334 on St. John and 340-772-7148 on St. Croix. You can download and fill out a registry form at www.dhs.gov.vi .
- Have several ways to receive alerts. Sign up for [Alert VI](#) to receive emergency notifications in the U.S. Virgin Islands. Download the [FEMA app](#) on your smartphone and receive real-time alerts from the [National Weather Service](#) for up to five locations nationwide. Check the settings on your mobile devices to ensure you can receive [Wireless Emergency Alerts](#), which require no sign-up.
 - Have an emergency charging option for your phone and other devices.
- Protect your home against storms. Declutter drains and gutters, consider hurricane shutters and leave room in your home to bring in outside furniture during a storm.
- Learn your evacuation routes, practice with your household, pets, and identify where you will stay during a hurricane. Follow the instructions from territorial agencies who will provide the latest recommendations based on the threat to your community and appropriate safety measures.
- Make sure your insurance policies and personal documents are up to date. Make copies and keep them in a secure password protected digital space. You might need your documents to apply for and receive assistance after a disaster.
- Have enough supplies for your household, include medication, disinfectant supplies, masks, pet supplies in your go bag or car trunk. After a hurricane, you may not have access to these supplies for days or even weeks.
 - Replenish supplies in your emergency kit and replace expired items as needed.



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Visit www.ready.gov/hurricanes , www.ready.gov/es/hurricanes and www.ready.gov/ht/hurricanes for more information on how to prepare for hurricanes, stay safe during a hurricane and returning home after a hurricane. Review Hurricane Preparedness Week's themes, such as know your risk: wind and water and take action today at www.noaa.gov/hurricane-prep-social-media-english and www.noaa.gov/hurricane-prep-social-media-en-espa-ol , and follow www.vitema.vi.gov for information on local events and community readiness.



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