

FEMA MONITORS HURRICANE EARL, ENCOURAGES EVERYONE TO BE PREPARED

***Families Should Visit [Ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)
to Learn Steps to Prepare for Hurricanes and Severe Weather***

Tracking Hurricane Earl:

http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/refresh/graphics_at2+shtml/204614.shtml?5-daynl?large#contents

WASHINGTON – As Hurricane Earl moves toward Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, FEMA is closely monitoring the storm and stands ready to support commonwealth and territorial officials in the region to ensure they have the resources to respond if needed. Earl was classified today as a hurricane by the National Hurricane Center. FEMA continues to urge everyone in the region to take steps now to ensure they are prepared for possible severe weather, and remember that hurricanes and tropical storms frequently bring flash flooding as well. Anyone can visit www.ready.gov to learn more about how to prepare for an emergency.

The National Hurricane Center has issued a hurricane watch for the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico, including the islands of Culebra and Vieques. In addition, the government of Antigua and Barbuda has issued a tropical storm warning and hurricane watch for the British Virgin Islands. A hurricane watch means that hurricane conditions are possible within the watch area. A watch is typically issued 48 hours before the anticipated first occurrence of tropical storm force winds, conditions that make outside preparations difficult or dangerous.

“We continue to monitor the storm and stay in close contact with commonwealth and territorial emergency management officials in the region to ensure they have the resources to respond if needed,” said FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate. “Our priority, as always, is to make sure that we are supporting local efforts as they work to keep residents and communities safe. Hurricane Earl should serve as a reminder that if you have not taken the time to get your family ready for an emergency, now is the time. Visit [Ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) to learn how.”

According to the National Hurricane Center, Hurricane Earl will pass near or over the Northern Leeward Islands tonight and Monday. Hurricane conditions may spread over the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico on Monday night. There are currently no coastal watches or warnings in effect for the United States mainland.

FEMA is taking swift, proactive action to support the U.S. Virgin Islands and the Puerto Rico islands of Culebra and Vieques as they prepare for possible landfall. FEMA already has staff on the ground in both areas working closely with commonwealth and territorial officials. FEMA has also already deployed an Incident Management Assistance Team (IMAT) to St. Thomas, and has one prepositioned in San Juan, where staff are on watch around the clock monitoring developments.

FEMA also has life-saving and life-sustaining commodities and supplies strategically located across the country to support states in their response, including in the areas of possible impact. These supplies,

including water, meals, tarps, blankets, generators and other essential items, can be replenished through the national logistics supply chain.

FEMA is also monitoring Hurricane Danielle, which is located 440 miles east of Bermuda, and a tropical cyclone off the coast of West Africa. According to the National Hurricane Center, Hurricane Danielle has decreased to a Category 1 hurricane and is traveling quickly northeastward, and is forecast to gradually weaken in the next 24 hours. Swells from Danielle are expected to gradually subside during the next day or so along portions of the United States East Coast. Large waves and dangerous surf from Danielle should diminish near Bermuda today.

While there currently are no coastal watches or warnings in effect for the United States mainland, history has shown that storm tracks can change quickly and unexpectedly. Individuals and their families should take the time to log on to www.ready.gov to find out how to prepare for hurricanes and other disasters.

The National Weather Service remains the source of official severe weather watches and warnings, including flash flooding which can take only a few minutes to develop in the case of heavy rains. FEMA encourages all individuals in the region to listen to NOAA Weather Radio and their local news to monitor for severe weather updates, and to follow the directions provided by their local officials.

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.

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