



VITEMA VIRGIN ISLANDS TERRITORIAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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VITEMA Announces Participation in CARIBE WAVE 2025 Tsunami Exercise

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS – The Virgin Islands Territorial Emergency Management Agency (VITEMA) announces the territory's participation in CARIBE WAVE 2025, an international tsunami exercise scheduled for Thursday, March 20, 2025. This annual exercise, coordinated by the UNESCO/IOC Intergovernmental Coordination Group for the Tsunami and Other Coastal Hazards Warning System for the Caribbean and Adjacent Regions (ICG/CARIBE-EWS), tests the effectiveness of tsunami warning systems throughout the Caribbean region.

CARIBE WAVE 2025 scenario will be a magnitude 8.6 earthquake off the coast of Portugal. This scenario will simulate the communication and coordination processes that would occur during an actual tsunami threat to the Caribbean region.

"Tsunami preparedness is critical for our island communities," said Daryl Jaschen, Director of VITEMA. "The USVI's participation in CARIBE WAVE provides an essential opportunity to test our emergency response systems and enhance public awareness about tsunami hazards."

How the Public Can Participate

VITEMA encourages all residents, businesses, schools, and organizations to participate in this important preparedness exercise:

1. **Register your participation** by March 17 at TsunamiZone.org/usvi
2. **On March 20th:**
 - Review or practice your tsunami evacuation plan with family, co-workers, or classmates
 - Conduct a simple tsunami discussion at home or work
 - Visit VITEMA website – Tsunami section to review / download Tsunami Evacuation Maps <https://vitema.vi.gov/plan-prepare/tsunamis>
 - Identify evacuation routes from your location to higher ground

Emergency Alert System Test



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As part of the exercise, VITEMA will be conducting a test of the Emergency Alert System. Residents should expect a test message to be delivered to their mobile phones on March 20th. This system-wide test is separate from the Alert VI system and does not require residents to opt-in to receive the alert.

IMPORTANT: The alerts you receive on March 20th are ONLY A TEST. No action is required beyond practicing your tsunami preparedness plan.

"We want to emphasize that this is only a test," added Director Jaschen. "When residents receive emergency alerts on their phones on March 20th, they should recognize this is part of our participation in the international CARIBE WAVE exercise. It's an excellent opportunity for everyone to think about what they would do in an actual tsunami emergency."

CARIBE WAVE exercises have been conducted annually since 2011, with participation growing each year. In 2024, the exercise involved 45 out of 48 Caribbean member states and territories with over 475,000 participants.

For more information about CARIBE WAVE 2025 and tsunami preparedness resources, visit vitema.vi.gov or tsunamizone.org.

VITEMA is the sole Virgin Islands government agency designated to supervise, administer, and coordinate all-hazards response and recovery operations. By building and sustaining effective partnerships with federal, state, and local government agencies, and with the private sector - individuals, families, non-profits, and businesses - VITEMA ensures the Territory's ability to rapidly recover from large and small disasters by assessing and mitigating hazards, enhancing preparedness, ensuring effective response, and building the capacity to recover.

VITEMA - St. Croix – 340-773-2244 – St. John – 340-776-2244 – St. Thomas – 340-774-2244 - Be Prepared, Stay Informed, and Be Vigilant!

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