



U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
NEWS RELEASE
WWW.EPA.GOV/NEWSROOM

CONTACT: press@epa.gov

IRMA UPDATE: Regions 2 and 4 Taking Precautions, Activating Emergency Response Teams

WASHINGTON – EPA is continuing preparations for Hurricane Irma, which is expected to hit Southern Florida, serviced by EPA Region 4. Irma has already made landfall in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, covered by EPA Region 2. The Agency is in the process of securing and assessing Superfund sites; compiling data for regulated facilities; granting fuel waivers to help stabilize prices at the pump and ensure emergency vehicles have access to fuel; and, preparing for infrastructure assessments and environmental sampling following the storm.

The Agency is focused on the safety of those in the affected areas and warns that unauthorized entry at any Superfund site, either prior to or following the storm, is prohibited as these sites can be extremely dangerous and can pose significant threats to human health.

The Regional Emergency Operation Center's in both Region 4 and Region 2 are prepared for the following field operations, including: drinking water and wastewater infrastructure assessment; facility assessment; debris and household hazardous waste management; and drinking water and environmental sampling.

As of September 7, 2017, the following information is available:

REGIONAL OPERATIONS CENTERS

- **Region 2:** About 43 personnel are currently involved in hurricane efforts and assessment teams are ready to deploy to Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. These efforts are being augmented by professional staff in EPA Region 2's Caribbean Environmental Protection Division (CEPD).
- **Region 4:** The Region has approximately 34 personnel involved in emergency response efforts. In addition, seven people are scheduled to deploy to Florida, including Regional Administrator Trey Glenn to the State Emergency Operations Center tomorrow.

RISK MANAGEMENT PLANS (RMPS)

- EPA is communicating with the Risk Management Program (RMP) and Facility Response Plan (FRP) bulk oil facilities to ensure they are secure and identify any vulnerabilities.
- EPA's Remedial program is currently performing desk-top triage of all remedial sites in Region 4 coastal states.

FUEL WAIVERS

- Today, EPA extended a low-volatility conventional gasoline waiver through September 26th in 38 states and the District of Columbia.
- Yesterday, EPA issued Red-Dye Diesel fuel waiver for vehicles used for emergency response and evacuations.

REGION 2 SUPERFUND SITES

- EPA assessed 23 Superfund and oil sites in Puerto Rico and U.S Virgin Islands to evaluate their vulnerabilities prior to Hurricane Irma hitting. The Region will conduct post-hurricane assessments of these facilities and sites.
- A complete list of Superfund and oil sites has been generated to prioritize post-hurricane visits. Additionally, a list of other regulated facilities has been created to conduct pre- and post-storm facility coordination and assessment.
- EPA teams will focus on immediate threats from hazardous substance releases and oil spills, orphan hazardous containers, household hazardous waste, contaminated debris, and drinking water/wastewater (DW/WW) issues.

REGION 4 SUPERFUND SITES

- Currently 80 sites from Miami to North Carolina are being reviewed and technical staff in Region 4 office are evaluating any vulnerabilities at each site. A list of regulated facilities and sites of potential concern is being refined based on Irma's path, storm surge and 100/500-year flood map predictions.
- If any site in the path of the storm is found to pose an immediate threat to nearby populations, EPA will immediately alert local officials.
- If cleanup activity is on-going at a site, EPA will instruct the on-site contractor to secure the site immediately. This includes evacuating personnel, ceasing all activity, and securing equipment and other potentially harmful materials. If no activity is currently occurring at the site, the site is considered secured but remains closely monitored.

- After the storm passes, floodwaters recede, and it is deemed safe to enter a site, EPA remedial managers and contractors conduct rapid assessments of sites based on priority to identify any damage and initiate cleanup plans if necessary.

###

**Visit The EPA's
Newsroom**