



U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
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## **EPA Prepares for Hurricane Maria and Continues Recovery Efforts from Irma**

WASHINGTON (September 18, 2017) - U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) continues to coordinate closely with local, state, and federal partners in response to Hurricane Irma and in preparation for Hurricane Maria.

Response teams remain on the ground in Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina. EPA has temporarily paused all response operations in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands in preparation for Hurricane Maria. EPA is prepared to begin response operations again following the storm.



An EPA on-scene coordinator meets with a wastewater treatment plant operator in Lee County, Fla. - Photo Credit: EPA

As of September 18, 2017, the following information is available:

### **REGIONAL OPERATIONS CENTERS**

#### **Region 2:**

- EPA response personnel that had been responding to Hurricane Irma in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands are being re-positioned in preparation for Hurricane Maria.
- EPA is making preparations to send teams to re-assess the situation after Hurricane Maria and respond to both Irma and Maria in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

#### **Region 4:**

- The Region has approximately 45 personnel involved in emergency response efforts and has established an Incident Command in St. Petersburg, Florida.
- The state of Florida identified 214 targets to date for field assessment for hazardous material and/or oil related issues. As of September 18, 2017, all 214 assessments have been completed. The list is composed of a combination of Facility Response Plan (FRP) and Risk Management Plan (RMP) facilities.
- The Region 4 Air, Pesticides, and Toxics Management Division (APTMD) contacted a total of 256 of 273 RMP facilities located in Florida. The Lehigh Acres Water Treatment Plant, located in Lehigh Acres, Florida, reported a 200-gallon release of chlorine-water and was assessed on Saturday, September 16, 2017. Field tests were performed at two locations and small amounts of residual chlorine were detected. The facility has retained a contractor for remediation and EPA continues to monitor the structure.
- The Region 4 Water Protection Division (WPD) continues to coordinate with FDEP and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) on drinking water and wastewater issues. Drinking water and wastewater facilities continue to submit their requests for assistance. The WPD compiled an inventory of community drinking water systems (CWS) and Publicly Owned Treatment Works (POTW) that may be used during post-storm damage assessment in Florida. At the request of USACE and FDEP, the water team will begin contacting wastewater treatment systems today to determine operating status.
- The SESD Mobile Laboratory remains prepared to conduct the following analyses for drinking water: total coliform, E. coli, fecal coliform, and enterococcus.
- The Region 4 Superfund Division deployed six Rapid Assessment Teams to Florida to conduct rapid assessments of all National Priority List (NPL) sites. As of September 18, 2017, all 93 NPL sites in Florida have been assessed; all 22 sites in Georgia have been assessed; all 17 sites in Alabama have been assessed; and all 36 sites in South Carolina have been assessed.
- The Region 4 Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) Division identified 9 EPA-lead corrective action sites that were prioritized for assessment by NPL field teams. As of September 18, 2017, all sites have been assessed with no major impacts identified.
- EPA is currently working with FDEP, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), and USACE to develop and implement debris management strategies and operations.

#### **Region 4 Federally Recognized Tribes:**

- Region 4 continues to coordinate with the Bureau of Indian Affairs to offer assistance as needed to tribes in the impacted areas.

#### **ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS AND FUEL WAIVERS**

- **NPDES Permits** - Last week, EPA issued [a letter to FDEP](#) to ensure that all facilities impacted by Irma are familiar with the provisions included in their National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits that allow for temporary noncompliance

during emergency circumstances. This action helps ensure ports and other facilities get back into operation as quickly as possible while minimizing environmental impacts.

- **No Action Assurance (NAA)** - EPA policy allows the agency to issue NAAs in cases where it is necessary to avoid extreme risks to public health and safety and where no other mechanism can adequately address the matters. The agency has issued the following NAAs related to Hurricane Irma:
  - On September 15, EPA granted an NAA for the import of 255 power generators by the Yamaha Motor Corporation, U.S.A., to be donated for use in communities impacted by Hurricanes Harvey and Irma in Texas and Florida, to assist in recovery efforts.
  - On September 13, 2017, EPA announced that it will not pursue enforcement for Clean Air Act violations related to the use of dyed diesel reserves in vehicles and equipment that are being used by Duke Energy to respond to Florida power outages as a result of Irma. Due to conditions related to the storm, Duke is not able to obtain adequate supplies of required ultra low sulfur diesel fuel needed to operate its fleet of response vehicles. This NAA was issued in response to a request from Florida Governor Rick Scott, is in effect immediately, and terminates when all diesel reserves have been used or by the end of the day on September 22, 2017, whichever comes first.
  - On September 11, 2017, EPA issued an NAA to assist all Florida power plant facilities to maintain the supply of electricity to customers and facilities. This action will help meet the needs of FDEP and will assist Florida utility generators to maintain the supply of electricity to customers and critical facilities in the state, while facilitating timely restoration of lost electrical service caused by Irma.
  - On Sunday, September 10, 2017, Florida requested and EPA issued an NAA for Tampa Electric Company's Big Bend Station, Polk Power Station, and Bayside Power Station for compliance with air permit conditions to ensure adequate supply of electric power.
  - On Friday, September 8, 2017, EPA issued an NAA to allow emergency and backup electric generating units in Monroe County, Florida, the county that encompasses the Florida Keys, to operate without meeting all pollution controls in order to facilitate the supply of needed electricity during and after Irma.
- Earlier this month, EPA extended a low-volatility conventional gasoline waiver through September 26, 2017, in 38 states and the District of Columbia.

#### **REGION 4 SUPERFUND SITES, OIL SITES AND OTHER FACILITIES**

- EPA deployed six NPL Assessment Teams on Tuesday, September 12, 2017, who began assessment work on September 13, 2017.
- As of September 18, 2017, all NPL sites in Florida, Georgia, Alabama, and South Carolina have been assessed. The following issues were identified:

- **Fairfax Wood Treating (Jacksonville, FL)** - Due to heavy rain, some runoff concerns were identified at an on-site retention point and a washout underneath some site fencing. Samples were collected from the pond to determine whether contamination issues are present/absent and results will be available this week.
- **Post and Lumber Preserving Co, Inc. (Quincy, FL)** - During a site assessment a tear in the geo-membrane cap was identified. The site's EPA project manager is working with a contractor to assess the full extent of the damage and determine whether a patch might be sufficient.
- **Terry Creek Dredge Spoil Areas/Hercules Outfall (Brunswick, GA)** - The site has minor damage and the responsible party is working with a contractor to address the issues.

For information and updates from EPA, visit: [www.epa.gov/hurricane-irma](http://www.epa.gov/hurricane-irma)

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