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## **EPA Exercises Enforcement Discretion to Assist with Generation of Electric Power During Earthquake Recovery in Puerto Rico**

Contact: Press ([press@epa.gov](mailto:press@epa.gov))

**WASHINGTON** (February 14, 2020) – The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced today that it will exercise enforcement discretion regarding some aspects of operation of electric power generating units at Puerto Rico Electric Power Authority (PREPA) facilities that are necessary for supplying electricity to the people of Puerto Rico in the aftermath of recent earthquakes. Beginning in December 2019, Puerto Rico has experienced repeated earthquakes and aftershocks resulting in extreme damage to its power grid. On January 7, 2020, the Governor of Puerto Rico signed an Executive Order decreeing a state of emergency throughout Puerto Rico. On January 16, 2020, President Trump signed a major disaster declaration for Puerto Rico.

EPA has responded to certain requests by PREPA for “no action assurances” in order to operate certain of its generating units for more hours or in a manner not otherwise permitted by law in order to provide electric power to citizens and critical infrastructure in Puerto Rico, and to facilitate restoration of lost electrical service caused by the earthquakes. EPA will continue to work with PREPA to address issues arising from the earthquakes.

EPA policy allows the Agency to issue no action assurances in cases where it is necessary to avoid extreme risks to public health and safety and where no other mechanism can adequately address the matter. EPA believes that the exercise of enforcement discretion in these circumstances is in the public interest and will help address the emergency circumstances in Puerto Rico.

To learn more, visit: [https://response.epa.gov/site/site\\_profile.aspx?site\\_id=14624](https://response.epa.gov/site/site_profile.aspx?site_id=14624)

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