

Urgent – Marine Weather Message

High Surf Advisory

Antigua and Barbuda Meteorological Services

11:15 PM Monday 21 December 2020

...High surf advisory in effect for Antigua, Barbuda, Anguilla and the British Virgin Islands, and goes into effect Tuesday for St. Kitts and Nevis...

Locations to be affected: Reefs and mainly exposed northern and north-facing coastlines with relatively shallow, gently to moderately sloping near shore areas.

Timing: Until Saturday for all except St. Kitts and Nevis, which is for Tuesday to Wednesday.

Synopsis: Moderate, long period swells, from a strong low-pressure system over the northern Atlantic, are impacting the area, mainly the northern and north-facing coastlines, including eastern coastlines by Thursday. The threat level is moderate, and there is the potential for significant impacts to the life and property of persons using affected coastlines. These swells are expected to cause life-threatening surfs and rip currents near some coastlines. A high surf advisory means that dangerous surfs of 2 to 3 metres or 6 to 10 feet will affect some coastlines in the advisory area, producing hazardous conditions.

Seas: 2 to 3 metres (6 to 10 feet), occasionally or locally reaching near 4 metres (over 12 feet), mainly on Thursday. Swell period: 10 to 14 seconds. **Swells:** North becoming northeast by Thursday at 1.5 to 2 metres (5 to 6 feet) and occasionally higher.

Surfs (breaking swells): Over 2 metres (over 6 feet). These conditions will be conducive for dangerous rip currents. Please note that surfs could be as much as twice the height of swells, depending on the bathymetry of the near shore areas.

Coastal flooding: High tides combine with onshore wind and swell actions could result in localized coastal flooding and beach erosion.

Potential Impacts: Loss of life - strong currents that can carry even the strongest swimmers out to sea; injuries to beachgoers; beach erosion; sea water splashing onto low lying coastal roads; beach closures; localized disruptions to marine recreation and businesses; financial losses; damage to coral reefs; saltwater intrusion and disruptions to potable water from desalination. High surfs can knock spectators off exposed rocks and jetties.

Precautionary: Beachgoers should be extremely cautious; bathe only where lifeguards are present or the sheltered, less affected beaches, mainly to the south.

Rip currents are powerful channels of water flowing quickly away from shore, which occur most often at low spots or breaks in the sandbar and near structures such as groins, jetties and piers. If caught in a rip current, relax and float. Don't swim against the current. If able, swim in a direction following the shoreline. If unable to escape, face the shore and call or wave for help.

Please continue to monitor these hazardous, life-threatening marine conditions. Stay tuned to updates coming out of the Met Office via antiguamet.com and facebook.com/abmetservice

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