

Urgent – Marine Weather Message

High Surf Warning

Antigua and Barbuda Meteorological Services

9:20 AM Thursday 17 September 2020

High surf warning in effect for Antigua, Barbuda and Anguilla. The warning will be extended to the British Virgin Islands tonight.

Locations to be affected: Reefs and especially exposed eastern and northern coastlines with relatively shallow, gentle to moderately sloping near shore areas.

Timing: Until Saturday night.

Synopsis: Moderate, long period swells, from Hurricane Teddy, are impacting the area, mainly eastern coastlines; this will spread to northern coastlines tomorrow. The threat level is high and there is the potential for extensive impacts to the life and property of persons using some affected coastlines. These swells are expected to cause life-threatening surfs and rip currents.

Seas: 2 to 3 metres (7 to 10 feet), occasionally or locally reaching near 4 metres (13 feet). Swell period: 9 to 13 seconds. **Swells:** East, becoming northeast Friday at 2 to 3 metres (7 to 10 feet) and occasionally higher.

Surfs (breaking swells): Over 3 metres (over 10 feet). These conditions will be very 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 will result in 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; disruptions to marine recreation and businesses; financial losses; damage to coral reefs; salt water intrusion and disruptions to potable water from desalination. High surfs can knock spectators off exposed rocks and jetties. Breaking waves may occasionally impact harbours making navigating the harbour channel dangerous.

Precautionary/preparedness actions: A high surf warning means that dangerous battering waves, with surfs of over 3 metres or over 10 feet, will pound some shoreline in the forecast area, producing life-threatening conditions. No one should enter the waters of the affected areas, especially on the eastern sides of the islands. All are also urged to stay away from rocky and or coastal structures along beaches in the affected areas.

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

Forecaster: Dale Destin