

Urgent – Marine Weather Message

High Surf Advisory

Antigua and Barbuda Meteorological Services

1:00 AM Friday 12 October 2018

The high surf advisory remains in effect for Antigua and Barbuda, the rest of the Leeward Islands and the British Virgin Islands until Monday.

Long, northerly swells, from Hurricane Leslie, continue to reach the islands. These swells are once again expected to cause dangerous breaking waves (surfs) and life-threatening rip currents.

Seas/Swells: Significant wave heights of 1.5 to 2 metres or 5 to 7 feet and occasionally exceeding 2.5 metres or reaching 9 feet. Northerly swells of 1.5 to 2 metres or 5 to 7 feet and occasionally exceeding 2.5 metres or reaching 9 feet.

Surfs: Breaking swells or surfs of over 2 metres or over 6 feet are expected. These conditions will be conducive for dangerous rip currents. Please note that surfs could be as much as twice the height of swells.

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

Locations (to be) affected: Mainly exposed and shallow northern and eastern facing beaches and coastlines.

Timing: Until Saturday.

Impacts (possible/likely/expected): 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; 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 advisory means that dangerous high surfs of 2 to 3 metres or 6 to 10 feet will affect beaches in the advisory area, producing localized beach erosion and dangerous swimming conditions. Beachgoers should be extremely cautious; bathe only where lifeguards are present or the sheltered, less affected beaches on 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.

Stay tuned for further updates.

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