



Environmental Data and Governance Initiative Website Monitoring Follow Up Report

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Confirmation of Changes to the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Hurricane Maria Webpage

This report confirms changes to websites described by the following article:
["FEMA removes statistics about drinking water access and electricity in Puerto Rico from website"](#)

October 5, 2017

Writing and review of this report was conducted and overseen by the members of EDGI's Website Monitoring Committee: Andrew Bergman, Gretchen Gehrke, and Toly Rinberg.

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ADDITIONAL CONFIRMATION DISCLAIMER - *This confirmation report has gone through an abbreviated vetting procedure in order to quickly confirm changes to websites that were published in a news article. A Website Monitoring Report, which will be fully vetted, may be written, referencing this report, to characterize any changes not described in the article.*

Confirmation of Changes to the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Hurricane Maria Webpage

Overview

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) removed statistics from the "Federal Response Updates" section on its "Hurricane Maria" webpage. Certain subsections and bullet points reporting statistical metrics, quantifying access to electricity and drinking water, were removed. Additional statistics, descriptive bullet points, and images were also updated. This report confirms the changes to FEMA's "Hurricane Maria" webpage identified by *The Washington Post* article "[FEMA removes statistics about drinking water access and electricity in Puerto Rico from website](#)".

Description

Over the last two weeks, there have been regular changes to the "Federal Response Updates" section on FEMA's Hurricane Maria webpage at the URL www.fema.gov/hurricane-maria. At the time of this report's writing, the webpage was most recently altered some time between, [October 3, 8:51 PM](#) and [October 5, 2017, 5:16 PM ET](#),¹ according to the Internet Archive's Wayback Machine. For the October 5th version of the webpage, FEMA is noting that "All figures as of October 5, 2017, 10 am EDT".

Between these versions, the "Federal Response Updates" section was changed, with updates to statistics, descriptions of emergency logistic and impact information, and images. One subsection, which previously reported on electricity access, titled "Power Restoration and Fuel Impacts" was removed entirely. Other bullet points, including one reporting on water access, and a schematic titled "LOGISTICS SNAPSHOT for HURRICANE MARIA" were also removed. This report only examines changes to the "Federal Response Updates" section.

Confirmed changes

The removal of the following statistical metrics confirms [The Washington Post's reporting](#):

- A subsection on "Power Restoration and Fuel Impacts", which included a reported statistic that "5.4% (+0.4) customers have electricity", was removed (1.1e)
- A bullet point stating "50% Puerto Rico residents have access to drinking water (*based on Puerto Rico Aqueduct and Sewer Authority clientele)", was removed from a subsection on "Water/Wastewater Impacts" (1.1h)

¹ Note: Internet Archive's Wayback Machine reports times in GMT

Detailed Description of Changes

Page 1: Hurricane Maria

- URL: <https://www.fema.gov/hurricane-maria>
- Side-by-side View: 10/4/17 to 10/5/17
- Changes occurred between **Oct 3, 2017 8:51 PM ET** and **Oct 5, 2017 5:16 PM ET**
(Note: Internet Archive's Wayback Machine reports times in GMT)
- Section being addressed: "Federal Response Updates"

Screenshot 1.1

(1.1a) Changed phrase "All figures as of October 3, 2017, 10 am EDT" to "All figures as of October 5, 2017, 10 am EDT"

(1.1b) Changed subsection "Federal Force Laydown"

From:

- There are more than 12,300 federal staff representing 36 departments and agencies and including more than 800 FEMA personnel, on the ground in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands engaged in response and recovery operations from Hurricanes Maria and Irma.
- 18 states supporting 62 requests for mutual aid
- USS Wasp scheduled to arrive Tuesday Oct 3 with 13 helicopters

To:

- There are more than 14,000 federal staff including more than 800 FEMA personnel, on the ground in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands engaged in response and recovery operations from Hurricanes Maria and Irma.
- 19 states supporting 64 requests for mutual aid

(1.1c) Changed subsection "Survivor Impacts"

From:

- More than 240 patients seen by U.S. Health and Human Services medical teams
- More than 65% (+15%) of grocery and big-box stores open
- More than 78% (101 of 128) USPS post offices providing mail for pick up or delivery to P.O. boxes
- 24 municipalities added for Individual Assistance

To:

- All municipalities are eligible for Individual Assistance
- Approximately 65% of grocery stores are open
- Mail pick-up or delivery to P.O. boxes at all 128 post offices including Vieques and Culebra

(1.1d) Added image with caption "Coast Guard crews deliver relief supplies to residents in Bayamon, Puerto Rico. Credit: DVIDS"

(1.1e) Removed subsection "Power Restoration and Fuel Impacts"

- San Juan financial district is back on the electrical grid – 5.4% (+0.4) customers have electricity
- Roughly 70% retail gas stations are operational
- 17 (+7) generators installed by the USACE for critical infrastructure

(1.1f) Removed image titled "LOGISTICS SNAPSHOTS for HURRICANE MARIA"

(1.1g) Changed subsection "Transportation Impacts"

From:

- More than 20 miles of roadway cleared; 12 major highways open; 5 (+2) state roads open
- 92% (13 of 14) deep-water ports are fully open, or open with restrictions
- 100% airports are open
- 147 arrivals and 141 departures from Luis Muñoz Marín International Airport (SJU) in San Juan on October 2.

To:

- More than 30 miles of roadway cleared
- 100% of federally maintained ports are open or open with restrictions
- 100% airports are open or open with restrictions

(1.1h) Changed subsection "Water/Wastewater Impacts"

From:

- 50% Puerto Rico residents have access to drinking water (*based on Puerto Rico Aqueduct and Sewer Authority clientele)
- 17% waste water treatment plants operational
- 900 sandbags on-hand to stabilize Guajataca Dam spillway

To:

- 64% of waste water treatment plants are working on generator power

(1.1i) Added image with caption "Citizen-Soldiers from the New York National Guard work alongside the Puerto Rico National Guard and community members to bring water to residents in Lares, Puerto Rico. Credit: DVIDS"

(1.1j) Changed subsection "Hospitals and Medical Care Impacts"

From:

- To provide additional surge capacity if needed, the Department of Defense hospital ship USNS COMFORT is arriving in Puerto Rico today (October 3).
 - The ship offers the full range of medical care with surgical, obstetric and pediatric capability and is equivalent to a level-two trauma center in the United States. The ship is staffed by more than 500 medical personnel and support staff and holds 250 hospital beds.

- 94% (64/68) hospitals are open
- 8 VA hospitals are open; 14 hospitals are on the electrical grid
- 96% (46/48) Dialysis Centers open
- 11 Disaster Medical Assistance Support Teams on site, as part of the National Disaster Medical Support Team activation

To:

- To provide additional surge capacity if needed, the Department of Defense hospital ship USNS Comfort arrived in Puerto Rico on October 3
 - The ship offers the full range of medical care with surgical, obstetric and pediatric capability and is equivalent to a level-two trauma center in the United States. The ship is staffed by more than 500 medical personnel and support staff and holds 250 hospital beds.
- 92% (64/68) hospitals are open
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(1.1k) In subsection "Commodity Distribution" changed sentence "As of October 1, the Governor of Puerto Rico established 11 Regional Staging Areas around the island, serving all 78 municipalities." to "As of October 1, the Governor of Puerto Rico established Regional Staging Areas around the island, serving all 78 municipalities."

(1.1l) Changes to the "On Social Media" subsection, not visible in Screenshot 1.1, are not detailed in this report.

https://www.fema.gov/hurricane-maria

17:04 PM

▼ Federal Response Updates

All figures as of October 3, 2017, 10 am EDT

Federal Force Laydown

- There are **more than 12,300 federal staff** representing **36 departments and agencies** and including **more than 800 FEMA personnel** on the ground in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands engaged in response and recovery operations from Hurricanes Maria and Irma.
- 18 states** supporting **62 requests** for mutual aid
- USS Wasp** scheduled to arrive Tuesday Oct 3 with 13 helicopters

Survivor Impacts

- More than **240 patients** seen by U.S. Health and Human Services medical teams
- More than **65%** (+15%) of grocery and big-box stores open
- More than **78%** (101 of 128) USPS post offices providing mail for pick-up or delivery to P.O. boxes
- 24 municipalities** added for Individual Assistance

Power Restoration and Fuel Impacts

- San Juan financial district is back on the electrical grid – 5.4% (+0.4) customers have electricity
- Roughly **70% retail gas stations** are operational
- 17** (+7) generators installed by the USACE for critical infrastructure

Transportation Impacts

- More than **20 miles of roadway cleared**. **12** major highways open; **5** (+2) state roads open
- 92%** (13 of 14) deep-water ports are fully open, or open with restrictions
- 100% airports** are open
- 147 arrivals** and **141 departures** from Luis Muñoz Marín International Airport (SJU) in San Juan on October 2.

Water/Wastewater Impacts

- 50%** Puerto Rico residents have **access to drinking water** (*based on Puerto Rico Aqueduct and Sewer Authority clientele)
- 17%** waste water treatment plants operational
- 900** sandbags on-hand to stabilize Guejataca Dam spillway

Hospitals and Medical Care Impacts

- To provide additional surge capacity if needed, the Department of Defense hospital ship **USNS COMFORT** is arriving in Puerto Rico today (October 3).
 - The ship offers the **full range of medical care** with surgical, obstetric and pediatric capability and is equivalent to a level-two trauma center in the United States. The ship is staffed by more than **500 medical personnel** and support staff and holds **250 hospital beds**.
- 94%** (64/68) hospitals are open
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- 96%** (46/48) Dialysis Centers open
- 11** Disaster Medical Assistance Support Teams on site, as part of the National Disaster Medical Support Team activation

Commodity Distribution

- FEMA, working in coordination with federal partners, has provided **millions of meals** and **millions of liters of water** to Puerto Rico and U.S. Virgin Islands. Additional meals and water continue to arrive to the islands regularly via air and sea.
- As of October 1, the Governor of Puerto Rico established **11 Regional Staging Areas** around the island, serving all **78 municipalities**. The National Guard is delivering supplies to the regional staging areas around the island.

LOGISTICS SNAPSHOT FOR HURRICANE MARIA

https://www.fema.gov/hurricane-maria

17:05 PM

▼ Federal Response Updates

All figures as of October 5, 2017, 10 am EDT

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- 19 states** supporting **64 requests** for mutual aid

Survivor Impacts

- All municipalities are eligible for Individual Assistance
- Approximately **65% of grocery stores** are open
- Mail pick-up or delivery to P.O. boxes at all 128 post offices including Vieques and Culebra

Transportation Impacts

- More than **30 miles of roadway cleared**
- 100% of federally maintained ports** are open or open with restrictions
- 100% airports** are open or open with restrictions.

Water/Wastewater Impacts

- 64%** of waste water treatment plants are working on generator power

Hospitals and Medical Care Impacts

- To provide additional surge capacity if needed, the Department of Defense hospital ship **USNS Comfort** arrived in Puerto Rico on October 3.
 - The ship offers the **full range of medical care** with surgical, obstetric and pediatric capability and is equivalent to a level-two trauma center in the United States. The ship is staffed by more than **500 medical personnel** and support staff and holds **250 hospital beds**.
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- As of October 1, the Governor of Puerto Rico established **Regional Staging Areas** around the island, serving all **78 municipalities**. The National Guard is delivering supplies to the regional staging areas around the island.

Coast Guard crews deliver relief supplies to residents in Bayamon, Puerto Rico. Credit: DVIDS

Citizen-Soldiers from the New York National Guard work alongside the Puerto Rico National Guard and community members to bring water to residents in Lorei, Puerto Rico. Credit: DVIDS

Internet Archive: [previous version from October 4, 2017](#) and [current version from October 5, 2017](#) (Note: Internet Archive's Wayback Machine reports times in GMT)