

Hurricane Maria Knocks Out Power and Causes Massive Flooding in Puerto Rico



San Juan, September 21 (RHC)-- Hurricane Maria tore across Puerto Rico as the strongest storm to hit the U.S. territory in almost 90 years, leaving at least nine people dead and causing widespread flooding.

Puerto Rican Governor Ricardo Rossello asked U.S. President Donald Trump to declare the island a "disaster" area, making it eligible for increased recovery funding.

After devastating Dominica and Guadeloupe and battering St. Croix in the U.S. Virgin Islands, Hurricane Maria struck Puerto Rico as a Category 4 storm. The island's capital, San Juan, was battered with sustained winds of 220 kilometers per hour, according to the U.S. based National Hurricane Center, NHC.

Puerto Rico's Governor Ricardo Rossello told CNN that the energy grid took such a severe blow that restoring power to everyone may take months. Rossello said the system was "a little bit old, mishandled and weak."

The extent of the damage is still being assessed. Carlos Mercader, a spokesman for Rossello said it was "total devastation."

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