

Puerto Rico's Humanitarian Crisis after Hurricane Maria

3.4 million of our fellow Americans have been affected. Gov. Ricardo Rosselló called the situation a potential [humanitarian crisis](#) and warned mainland Americans that if they wanted to avoid the dire prediction, "recognize that we Puerto Ricans are American citizens; when we speak of a catastrophe, everyone must be treated equally."

1. Thousands of Puerto Ricans are Homeless and in Shelters

- An estimated [10,000](#) Puerto Rican residents remain in shelters
- Residents have even been encouraged to leave the island if they are able

2. Gasoline and Electricity Are Scarce

- The Defense Logistics Agency is sending 124,000 gallons of diesel fuel to Puerto Rico, reported [The Washington Post](#)- but that is not enough
- Electricity will be out for another four to six months, forcing people to rely on generators, if they can get them & continue to run them on fuel.
- The power grid to the island will take months to repair

3. The Guajataca Dam is Life-Threatening

- The Guajataca Dam in northwest Puerto Rico may trigger a "[life-threatening deluge](#)" as a landslide formed at the bottom of the dam.
- [70,000 people](#) will be in danger if the dam fails
- Residents have been urged to evacuate the northwest side of the island.

4. Puerto Rican Homes are Destroyed and Lives Ruined

- Massive water & wind damage to the structures that remain barely standing.
- Power outages are widespread
- Phone services have been impaired and service is spotty if available at all
- Needed medicines are hard to come by and refrigeration is nearly non-existent

5. Water is Running Out. Food is scarce.

- Water shortages exist throughout the island.
- Clean water is not readily available.
- The inability to have proper sanitation will result in disease and people dying.
- Manati mayor Jose Sanchez told [The San Diego Union Tribune](#). "There's a crisis now," he told reporters. "I have all of these hills that were practically cleaned out with this storm. I was there with children and elderly people who need water. I need water for my town."

8. Estimated that 80% of Puerto Rico's Crops are Destroyed

- Hurricane Maria flattened and destroyed crops in Puerto Rico
- The Secretary of Agriculture, Carlos Flores Ortega, [estimated](#) a \$780 million loss in agriculture yields across the territory.

I want to help but I'm not sure where to begin. How can I help?

The PS 39 community is mobilizing so that we can best come to the aid of our neighbors and friends. The PS 39 Student Council, Parent Association & our school community are encouraged to stay updated on how you can best help by checking in with your Class Parents and looking at the PS 39 website for more information. The issue is not whether we want to donate but how we can actually make an impact and really help those that are affected. This recovery is going to take a very long time so urgent help is needed right now, but in 3 months, 6 months time our friends and neighbors will still be hurting.

TO DONATE RIGHT NOW:

United for Puerto Rico:

<http://prfaa.pr.gov/unitedforpuertorico/>

[United For Puerto Rico](#), an organization created by the governor's wife Beatriz Rosselló in collaboration with the private sector, is providing a way for anyone to help victims in Puerto Rico. On Tuesday, Rosselló retweeted an endorsement of United for Puerto Rico,. The initiative aims to provide aid and support to those affected in Puerto Rico by the impact of Hurricane Irma and Hurricane María. The organization also has a list of needed [construction materials and other supplies](#) for those who would rather donate goods instead of money.

Turin Aviation Group:

When you log onto Amazon, search for [Turin Aviation Group](#) in the search engine for wish lists.

You can purchase off an Amazon wish list and send to the Turin Aviation Group. The Turin Aviation Group (a multidisciplinary company built around expertise in Aerospace, Engineering, Intelligence, Security, and Logistics Support), is coordinating relief efforts to fly in supplies to Puerto Rico and target its worst affected areas. All materials they are requesting are on the Puerto Rican Federal Affairs Administration's list. They are making several flights starting ASAP! Former P.S. 39 Board member Jeannie Gallego can personally vouch for the group and knows they started shipping supplies in soon after the hurricane.

