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## 9-Year-Old Girl Pronounced Dead in Suspected Drowning Incident in St. Thomas

**VIPD responds to early alert, confirms death of young girl amid mysterious circumstances**

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ST. THOMAS — The V.I. Police Department has reported what it described as "a suspicious death" of a 9-year-old girl in St. Thomas, who was pronounced dead early Saturday morning in the area of Vitracó Mall.

The VIPD said officers arrived at the scene at 5:22 a.m. after receiving a call. Despite CPR efforts from emergency medical technicians, the child was pronounced dead on arrival.

Police Commissioner Ray Martinez told the Consortium Saturday night that though an autopsy will provide the official cause of death, the department has declared the incident "a suspicious

death" by suspected drowning. "This was a suspicious death that the VIPD is investigating as what appeared to be drowning," the commissioner said. "We cannot outright declare it a drowning yet because only the autopsy can confirm it."

Part of the mystery of the case is that while investigators believe the child may have drowned in waters somewhere on the St. Thomas waterfront, she was found in the area of the Vitracó Mall. Once on the scene, emergency medical technicians performed CPR; however, they found no vital signs.

Sources informed the Consortium that prior to the child's death, a disturbance occurred at her mother's residence around 4:00 a.m., during which the child's mother was reportedly throwing items outside the house before leaving with the child.

The commissioner said that on Saturday, several interviews were conducted and a person of interest was identified. The VIPD's release states that while the case hasn't been classified as a homicide, "it is being investigated as such."

The department has appealed to the community to come forward with information about the incident. Persons are urged to call 911, Major Crime at (340)642-8449, Crime Stoppers V.I. at 1(800)222-8477(TIPS), or online [here](#).