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## EPA Discovers Additional Liquid Petroleum Gas at St. Croix Refinery, Further Investigations Underway

### LPG Removal Efforts and Chemical Cleanup: Updates from EPA on St. Croix Facility

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**An aerial view of Port Hamilton Refinery and Transportation (St. Croix refinery). By. ERNICE GILBERT, V.I. CONSORTIUM**

The Environmental Protection Agency during a meeting Thursday revealed that additional Liquid Petroleum Gas (LPG) has been identified at the St. Croix refinery. This discovery came to light after the EPA gathered more information from the refinery and conducted a follow-up inspection.

The EPA's ongoing efforts to monitor and inspect the St. Croix refinery led to the realization that more LPG remains on-site than previously understood. The agency is currently finalizing its

inspection report to gain a comprehensive understanding of the situation. This will aid in determining the necessary steps to address the presence of this material.

The initial phase of removing LPG from the facility's equipment was paused on June 10 due to a shortage of shipping containers. Once additional containers arrived, the off-loading resumed and was completed by July 21, 2023. In total, approximately 26,700 gallons of LPG were recovered from the refinery units. The last of five shipping containers containing LPG left the island on August 10, 2023.

Under the supervision of the EPA, Port Hamilton Refinery and Transportation (PHRT) successfully removed key chemicals, including anhydrous ammonia, amines, and LPG, as mandated by EPA's legal action. The majority of these materials have been shipped off the island. However, a partially filled container of LPG, destined for incineration, is currently awaiting availability at the incineration facility. Additionally, about 175,000 gallons of amine water rinsate and 6,750 gallons of ammonia water rinsate remain at the refinery, with their final disposal being discussed by EPA and PHRT.

The refinery, under EPA oversight, saw over 327,000 gallons of rich amine liquid removed from its equipment. The process generated 175,000 gallons of amine rinsate, currently stored in tanks, awaiting final disposal. As for ammonia, 8,400 gallons were transferred into shipping containers and removed from the island on May 14. The remaining 6,750 gallons of ammonia rinse water are also under discussion for final disposal.

LPG, a fuel gas composed of a flammable mixture of hydrocarbon gases, is typically odorless unless treated with odor-causing chemicals, which is not the case at this facility. The refinery also used an amine system to remove harmful gases from refinery streams. Anhydrous ammonia, used as a gasoline additive, is a colorless gas and is stronger than household ammonia.

The EPA said it will continue its oversight and discussions with PHRT to ensure the safe and effective disposal of all remaining chemicals at the St. Croix refinery. The agency's priority remains in mitigating any potential risks and ensuring environmental safety.