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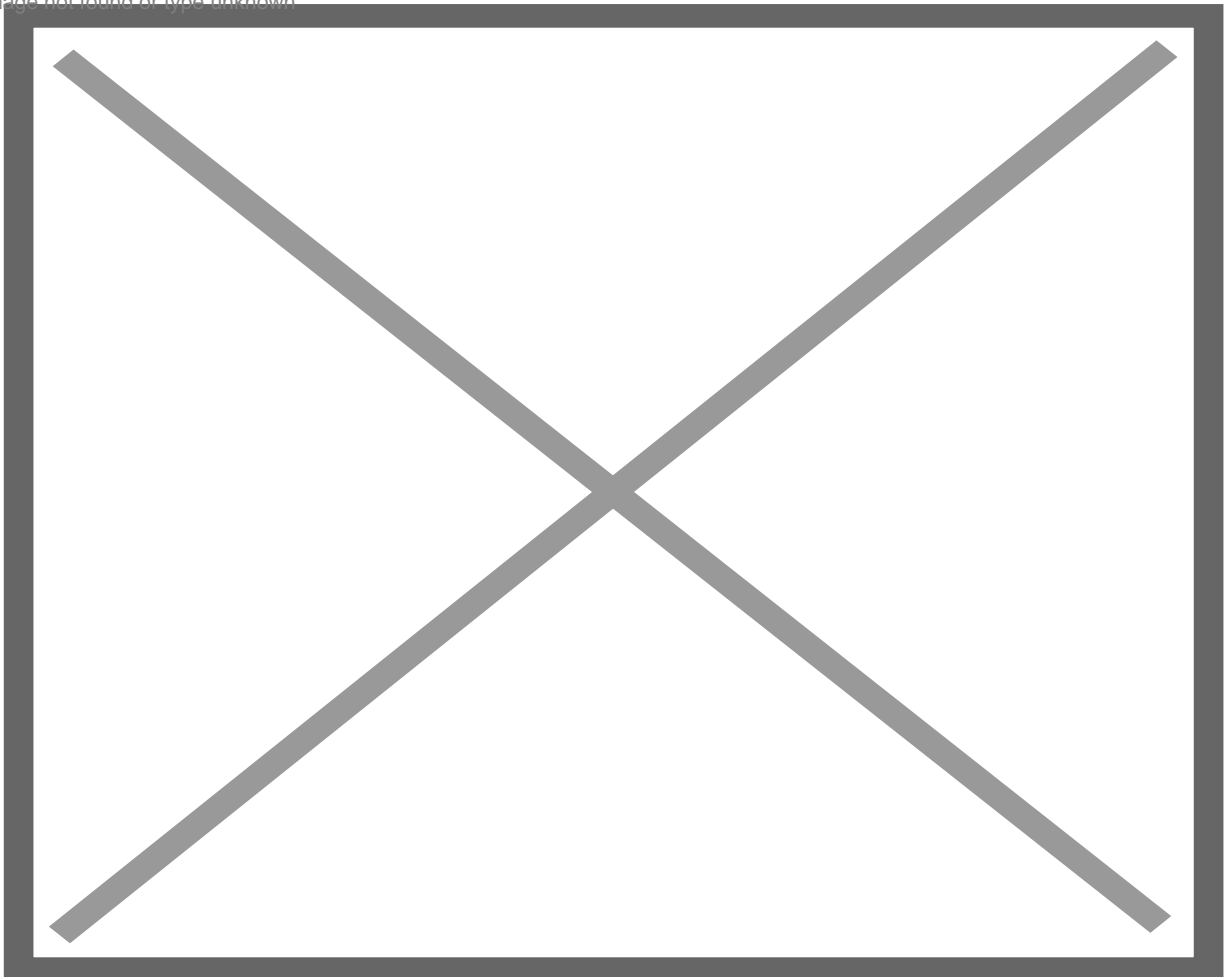
Elevated Health Risks Prompt DPNR Advisory to Refrain from Using Coastal Waters During Storms

Parents advised to keep children away from flood-prone beaches and areas with manholes as health risks increase

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Janeka Simon **May 22, 2024**

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Due to forecasts of heavy rainfall and potential flooding, the V.I Dept. of Planning and Natural Resources is advising the public to refrain from using coastal waters throughout the territory, until further notice.

Parents are urged to instruct their children to avoid storm water-impacted beaches and areas with manholes or storm water flooding. There is an elevated health risk from increased concentrations of bacteria in these areas of storm water runoff, such as puddles, ghuts and drainage basins, which may also contain harmful contaminants or pollutants.

DPNR said it will continue to monitor impacted areas and waters for safety.

All contractors, developers, and home builders are advised to maintain and implement additional erosion and sediment control practices at all disturbed properties. Please ensure the following measures are in place:?

- Preservation of natural vegetation

- Drainage swales/diversions

- Temporary and permanent seeding

- Soil sealers/binders

- Erosion control mats

- Soil retaining walls

- Construction entrances/exits

- Silt fencing

- Sediment traps

- Mulches, mats, and geotextiles

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Additionally, secure or remove all construction materials and equipment to prevent them from becoming airborne objects that could cause damage. To report any areas of concern, contact the Division of Environmental Protection Earth Change Program at (340) 774-3320 or (340) 773-1082.