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# Demolition of the Charles Harwood Memorial Complex Main Campus Begins

**New state-of-the-art public health facility to rise from the rubble with \$291 million in FEMA funding**

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**Demolition at the Charles Harwood Memorial Complex in Richmond, St. Croix commenced on Thursday, May 30th. By. V.I. DEPT. OF HEALTH**

The V.I. Department of Health has commenced the demolition of the Charles Harwood Memorial Complex's main campus as part of its efforts to construct a new state-of-the-art public health facility on St. Croix.

"We would like to thank you (the community) for the trust you have placed in us on constructing this critical infrastructure for the people of the Virgin Islands," said Reuben Molloy, assistant

commissioner at DOH, speaking from the demolition site. “Remember, our goal is to reduce health risks, improve access to equitable, quality health care services and enforce health standards.”

On Thursday, Lemartec USVI, the company contracted to carry out the demolition, began tearing down the eastern-most section of the large complex.

“It’s certainly an exciting day out here on the Charles Harwood Memorial Complex campus,” said Casey McIntyre, senior project manager for Lemartec USVI. “We completed the first phases of the project and now we’ll be going into the demolition of the main building. We will be commencing here with the most eastern wing. In preparation for that, we have cleared the building of all contents – stripped the entire building, in preparation for the demolition activities.”

Blasting is not planned during the demolition, and mitigation measures have been implemented to include privacy and dust screens around the work areas, the use of a water dust suppression machine, and wind direction monitoring.

Lemartec USVI also developed a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan and will use best management practices such as silt fencing, storm drain sediment covers, and track-out prevention, and will monitor and prepare for inclement weather, DOH said.

“We’re certainly doing our due diligence in this process to ensure we have a safe site as we continue the demolition of the building,” McIntyre said.

The VI Department of Health said it has also taken steps to minimize disruption of any school activities, business operations, and traffic in the area.

In August, Lemartec USVI completed the demolition of the Annex Building, which once served as the island’s hospital. In May of this year, the company also demolished the Old Club House and two other buildings located at the northeast corner of the campus.

The third and final phase, the demolition of the complex’s main campus, is slated to be complete by October 2024.

Health Commissioner Justa Encarnacion noted that the demolition demonstrates the department’s continued commitment to rebuilding the territory’s public health infrastructure.

“This forward progression is the result of a dedicated project management team working daily with key agencies such as the Office of Disaster Recovery and the VI Department of Public Works, and our vendors, to keep each of our disaster recovery projects on track,” Ms. Encarnacion said. “And most importantly, we could not do it without the community’s support. We are truly grateful to the St. Croix community, especially the neighboring Richmond residents, the Juanita Gardine School family, and nearby businesses for their patience and understanding throughout this process.”

“This is all part of Governor Albert Bryan Jr’s ‘Rebuild USVI’ plan to expedite the timeline of the disaster recovery effort,” she added.

On Thursday, DOH was joined by representatives of the VI Office of Disaster Recovery, the VI Department of Public Works, VITEMA, Witt O’Brien, The Strategy Group, and FLAD Architect.

The Charles Harwood Memorial Complex was severely damaged in the 2017 hurricanes and was one of the first projects deemed replaceable by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). FEMA awarded the territory \$291 million for the reconstruction of the complex, which will be built to current national construction codes and standards. DOH spent several months working through the local approval processes, including a historic preservation review.

Upon reconstruction, the facility will be officially renamed for St. Croix physician and former VI Delegate to Congress, Dr. Donna Christian Christensen.

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