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Underground System Failure Leaves Parts of Downtown Christiansted Without Power for Days

Heavy rains blamed for underground failure; local businesses report financial losses as WAPA relies on external experts to troubleshoot issues

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Downtown Christiansted By. V.I. CONSORTIUM

Editor's Note: Shortly after publication, the Consortium received word that power to the affected areas in Christiansted had been restored.

Original Story: ST. CROIX — A “failure on the underground system” is the reason why a portion of Christiansted has been without power since Saturday, said V.I. Water and Power Authority Chief Executive Office Karl Knight.

Mr. Knight was responding to a question from the Consortium on Monday, after several businesses complained to the publication about the lack of electricity affecting offices and shops on Company Street and environs.

“There was some water in the manhole from the heavy rain,” Mr. Knight said. “Something may have shorted out.” He indicated that teams were able to get most of Feeder 1A back online relatively quickly, “but there's a portion that we had to isolate to troubleshoot, so we're still working on that.” Mr. Knight said that WAPA needed to rely on third-party support “to help put some extra eyes on it,” and these individuals continued to troubleshoot the problem.

While Mr. Knight could offer no firm timeline for power restoration, he assured the public that the situation was being addressed with urgency.

The outage has taken a toll on businesses in the affected area, with several reporting financial losses. Among them is Common Cents Pub, a restaurant in Christiansted, which has been operating creatively to mitigate the impact.

In a social media post, the restaurant announced it would be open from 2:00 p.m. to sunset to sell food from its freezer stock, offering items “by the bag for the price I paid for them,” according to the owner. The establishment also advertised cocktails and takeout options, urging the community to show support during the challenging period. “Please come by and show some love and support and get some to-go food!” the post read.

While affected businesses like Common Cents Pub have taken steps to adapt, others continue to experience setbacks as they await power restoration. Mr. Knight emphasized that WAPA remains committed to resolving the issue as soon as possible.

The Consortium will continue to monitor the situation and provide updates as more information becomes available.