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## St. Thomas-Based Company Suffers \$400K Equipment Theft on St. Croix During Hospital Demolition Project

**A St. Thomas-based company lost over \$400,000 in heavy machinery stolen from a WAPA-leased property on St. Croix during a demolition job, prompting VIPD and private efforts to recover the equipment, including a helicopter search and reward offer.**

Crime / **Published On June 02, 2025 06:49 AM /**

Staff Consortium **June 02, 2025**

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**Heavy equipment stolen at a site near the Container Port on St. Croix.**

ST. CROIX — A company contracted to support the demolition of the Charles Harwood Memorial Hospital has reported the theft of heavy equipment valued at over \$400,000. The equipment, shipped from St. Thomas for the project, was stolen on two separate occasions from a property located on WAPA-leased land near the V.I. Port Authority's Container Port.

According to company representative Marian Prescod, the first theft occurred in March and involved a dump truck, a tractor head, and two lowboys. “Up to now, they haven’t found it,” Ms. Prescod said. A second incident took place more recently. That time, thieves targeted a red Freightliner dump truck and another tractor head. The ignition wires were cut, indicating an attempt to start the vehicles. While the effort failed, the thieves successfully removed and took the batteries. “I suspect they took the batteries to charge them and return to finish what they started,” Ms. Prescod explained.

Though the property was initially thought to fall under the jurisdiction of the Gordon A. Finch Molasses Pier—which is secured by V.I. Port Authority contractors—it is, in fact, leased by the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority (WAPA). This distinction explains why Port Authority-hired security companies stationed nearby were unaware of the thefts as they occurred, a concern that was highlighted by Ms. Prescod.

The V.I. Police Department is actively investigating the matter. According to updates received by The Consortium, investigators have reviewed streetlight camera footage as part of their effort to track the stolen equipment, but most of the cameras are non-functional. Video shared by the owner shows the dump truck at the Captain Morgan Rum Distillery (Diageo) stoplights, followed by a tractor head hauling a lowboy, and what appears to be a white car.

To assist in the search, the owner has hired a private helicopter to scour the island for signs of the missing machinery, but those efforts have so far proven unsuccessful. Another search is scheduled, Ms. Prescod said. A six-figure reward has also been offered for credible tips leading to the recovery of the stolen equipment, though the exact amount has not been disclosed.

The stolen assets were brought to St. Croix specifically for the [demolition of the Charles Harwood Memorial Hospital](#)—a major government contract now completed. Though cameras are being installed to discourage further attempts, the financial loss has left the company in a difficult position, and the owner is questioning how such large vehicles could vanish without a trace on an island the size of St. Croix.

“How do you not find a tractor head? And how do you not find two Mac trucks—one green, one blue—and a blue dump truck?” Ms. Prescod asked. “It’s insane. In three months, you can’t find a truck that was captured on camera?”

The VIPD said it intends to issue a statement on the matter.