

The Virgin Islands Consortium

WAPA Announces Rotational Power for St. Thomas and St. John After Overnight Blackout; Schools Adjust Schedules Amid Water Outage

After a total blackout hit STT and STJ on Wed. night, WAPA moved to rotational service on Thursday, citing high demand and generator strain, while a separate water outage forced VIDE to adjust operations at Charlotte Amalie High and Lockhart K-8 schools.

Community Center / **Published On September 04, 2025 05:09 AM /**

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The Randolph Harley Power Plant in St. Thomas, USVI. By. ERNICE GILBERT, V.I. CONSORTIUM.

ST. THOMAS — The V.I. Water and Power Authority on Thursday morning announced rotational service for St. Thomas and St. John, following a [districtwide outage](#) that left both islands without power the night before. WAPA also noted an error in the 7:00–9:00 a.m. rotation, clarifying that the affected feeders in that window were 8B and 7B. The utility said the schedule below is subject to change as necessary to meet generation and load demands.

Rotation Schedule for Thursday, Sept. 4, 2025

- 3AM–5AM: 6A, 5A
- 5AM–7AM: 7A, 7E
- 7AM–9AM: 8B, 7B (corrected)
- 9AM–11AM: 7C (Casi Hill), 6B, Westin St. John
- 11AM–1PM: 6A, 5A
- 1PM–3PM: 7A, 7E
- 3PM–5PM: 9C
- 5PM–7PM: 7B, 7E
- 7PM–9PM: 8A, 8B
- 9PM–11PM: 7C, 6B, Westin St. John

On Wednesday evening, WAPA issued a 7:11 p.m. alert reporting a districtwide outage impacting all customers on St. Thomas and St. John, adding that crews were working to restore service and the estimated restoration time was unknown.

Shortly after that alert, WAPA's director of corporate communications Shanell Petersen told the Consortium the territory was "coming from a blackout," explaining that generation at the Randolph Harley power plant was lost during an attempt to start Unit 15. "We lost the the generators, or the generation at the power plant when we attempted to start up unit 15. So right now we're coming from a blackout, so it's going to take a little bit of time to restore power," she said. On the status of the unit, Petersen added, "They're still assessing."

Petersen outlined the sequence that led to the broader failure. An under-frequency event occurred first, when demand exceeded available generation, tripping several feeders. “Initially the outage was due to under frequency, so there was more consumption than power, more demand than generation, and that's why some feeders went out,” she explained. The districtwide outage followed when “we attempted to start unit 15.” She noted it was unclear whether higher consumption prevented the unit from starting: “we can't say whether that's why unit 15 didn't come on yet,” while confirming, “we just weren't producing enough power at the time of the initial outage that impacted several feeders.”

Asked about demand pressures, Petersen said summer heat routinely strains the system—including into September—as units work harder and customers typically use more electricity for cooling. By contrast, during “high season” from a population standpoint, overall usage can be lower because “most people start to turn off their ACs, or they don't have them on as high or as long.” She also pointed to measures that have helped limit outages and under-frequency events in recent months, citing solar farms supplying additional power and battery installations at the Randolph Harley power plant, resources that have “assisted over the last few months,” as the utility continues to manage system conditions.

Separate Impact: VIDE Adjusts School Operations Due to WAPA Water Outage

In a separate announcement early Thursday, the V.I. Department of Education informed parents, guardians, students, faculty, and staff of adjusted operations at Charlotte Amalie High School and Lockhart K-8 School due to a WAPA water outage. According to WAPA, a water leak on the water main pipe prompted repairs scheduled to begin at 8:30 a.m., interrupting water service to campuses within the affected areas of Estate Thomas and Sugar Estate.

- Charlotte Amalie High School: Students will engage in asynchronous learning via a modified asynchronous schedule through the Microsoft Teams platform.
- Lockhart K-8 School: School will be closed today, Thursday, September 4, 2025.

VIDE noted that the health and safety of students, faculty, and staff remain the top priority, and that operational adjustments are necessary while WAPA completes repairs to restore water service. Parents and guardians were encouraged to stay connected to the Department's official communication channels for further updates.