

logo not found or type unknown

WAPA Says Apparent Vandalism Caused Major St. John Outage

WAPA says service was knocked out around 10:00 p.m. Saturday after what appeared to be deliberate cuts were discovered on a transmission line, leaving St. John without power until Sunday morning and prompting a VIPD investigation.

WAPA / **Published On March 16, 2026 05:55 AM /**

Staff Consortium **March 16, 2026**

Image not found or type unknown



ST. JOHN — The V.I. Water and Power Authority said an extended outage that disrupted electrical service on St. John Saturday night was traced to what appears to be intentional damage to a transmission line, prompting a police report and an ongoing investigation into possible vandalism.

According to WAPA, the outage began at approximately 10:00 p.m. on March 14, and during a preliminary inspection of the affected transmission line, personnel found distinctive cuts to the infrastructure that appeared deliberate rather than the result of equipment failure.

The authority said it immediately contacted the V.I. Police Department and filed a formal police report. WAPA said it is cooperating fully as VIPD investigates the incident, while also conducting an internal review to determine whether additional protective measures may be necessary to better safeguard infrastructure serving the St. John community.

“This type of action is extremely dangerous,” said Karl Knight, chief executive officer and executive director of the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority. “Tampering with high-voltage electrical infrastructure could have resulted in serious injury or death to the individual or individuals involved.”

WAPA said the damage had consequences beyond the immediate danger posed by interference with high-voltage equipment. The authority said the incident interrupted essential electrical service to St. John and affected residents, businesses, and critical services across the island.

The authority acknowledged the frustration experienced by many St. Johnians during the outage and said service was restored at approximately 11:46 a.m. Sunday.

WAPA thanked the community for its support and understanding while crews worked to restore power.

The authority is also urging anyone with information about the incident to contact the Virgin Islands Police Department at 340-774-2211 or 911.

WAPA said the protection of critical infrastructure is a shared responsibility and warned that damage to the electrical system not only puts lives at risk, but can also interrupt essential services for the wider community.