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## Powerwall Owners Could Earn Up to \$4,000 as V.I. Launches Virtual Power Plant to Support WAPA Grid

The Energy Office says nearly 3,000 Tesla Powerwalls could provide up to 40 megawatt hours of grid support during demand spikes and shortfalls, while a new solar-powered fast charger at UVI's RT Park will initially be free for public use.

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Virgin Islands residents who own Tesla Powerwall home battery storage systems could soon be paid up to \$4000 to make their stored energy available to support the municipal supply of electricity during “periods of elevated demand and generation shortfalls,” said V.I. Energy Office Director Kyle Fleming on Monday.

Fleming announced the launch of the territory's Virtual Power Plant, which "represents the culmination of years of work...to strategically prepare the territory for distributed energy coordination at scale." Nearly 3000 Tesla Powerwalls across the territory account for up to "40 megawatt hours of potential energy capacity," Mr. Fleming noted. These battery systems "have the ability to function collectively as a dispatchable energy resource capable of helping stabilize the grid during periods of stress."

Those who allow their Powerwalls to participate in the territorial VPP will receive compensation of \$1000 per system, capped at \$4000 per site. This would allow "portions of their stored battery energy system to support the grid during a maximum of 50 dispatch events per year," Director Fleming said. A notification will appear in the Tesla Powerwall app beginning Tuesday, inviting owners to join the VPP. "To encourage early participation and rapid enrollment, the Energy Office will be front-loading quarterly participation incentives for customers who enroll during the 2026 launch year," Mr. Fleming announced.

"The VPP is not the silver bullet that solves every energy challenge facing our electrical system," the Energy Office head clarified, "but as we approach the height of summer, it gives the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority another important tool in their toolbelt to help mitigate the exact type of strain we historically experience."

Mr. Fleming also announced the territory's first battery-coupled, solar-powered fast charging station, located at UVI's RT Park campus on St. Croix. The station is charged off the excess solar power from the RT Park's nearby solar farm, he disclosed. "That means the charger can continue operating independently of the grid, even during an outage, and can charge EVs from stored solar energy day and night," Mr. Fleming explained. "By co-locating solar battery and fast charging infrastructure, we can completely displace fossil fuels from the transportation needs, while simultaneously improving resiliency."

The station will initially be free for public use, however interested persons are asked to register, using a form that will be posted to VIEO's Facebook page.