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WAPA Sets 11 P.M.-6 A.M. Outage Wednesday as \$17 Million Feeder 13 Project Nears Completion

WAPA will interrupt power from roughly 11 p.m. Wednesday to 6 a.m. Thursday as crews complete another phase of the \$17 million Feeder 13 bypass, affecting 10 feeders and moving the utility closer to improved reliability for more than 37,000 customers.

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

The V.I. Water and Power Authority will interrupt electricity across 10 feeders beginning around 11 p.m. Wednesday as crews complete another round of work on the \$17 million Feeder 13 bypass project, a grid upgrade intended to improve reliability for more than 37,000 customers in

the St. Thomas-St. John District.

WAPA expects electricity to be restored around 6 a.m. Thursday.

The outage will affect Feeders 93E, 8E, 7E, 9C, 7C, 10B, 9B, 7B, Mall and Yacht Haven.

WAPA engineers and Haughland VI contractors will use the overnight interruption to complete remaining work on the bypass, which is intended to provide additional options for shifting electrical demand if problems develop along parts of the system.

“Once the work is completed, it builds some redundancy,” WAPA CEO Karl Knight told board members during a recent meeting.

The project “allows us to be able to replace the underground portions of Feeder 13. It allows us to shift load, which can share that load between Feeders 12 and the bypass and the existing 13,” he explained. “If something was to fail on one or the other, we have some redundancy that we don’t already have.”

The authority said the timing was selected to limit the disruption to customers while allowing crews to work safely.

The “overnight work window was carefully selected to minimize inconvenience while ensuring the work can be completed safely,” WAPA said.

The bypass is expected to reduce the risk of outages associated with the aging underground transmission line serving Feeder 13 and improve reliability for more than 37,000 customers across the district.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency provided approximately \$17 million for the project, which has taken about two years to reach its current stage.

Although the large-scale project is nearing completion, WAPA said one additional electricity interruption will be necessary after Wednesday night’s work to finalize the bypass.

“Customers will receive advance notice once that work is scheduled,” the authority said.