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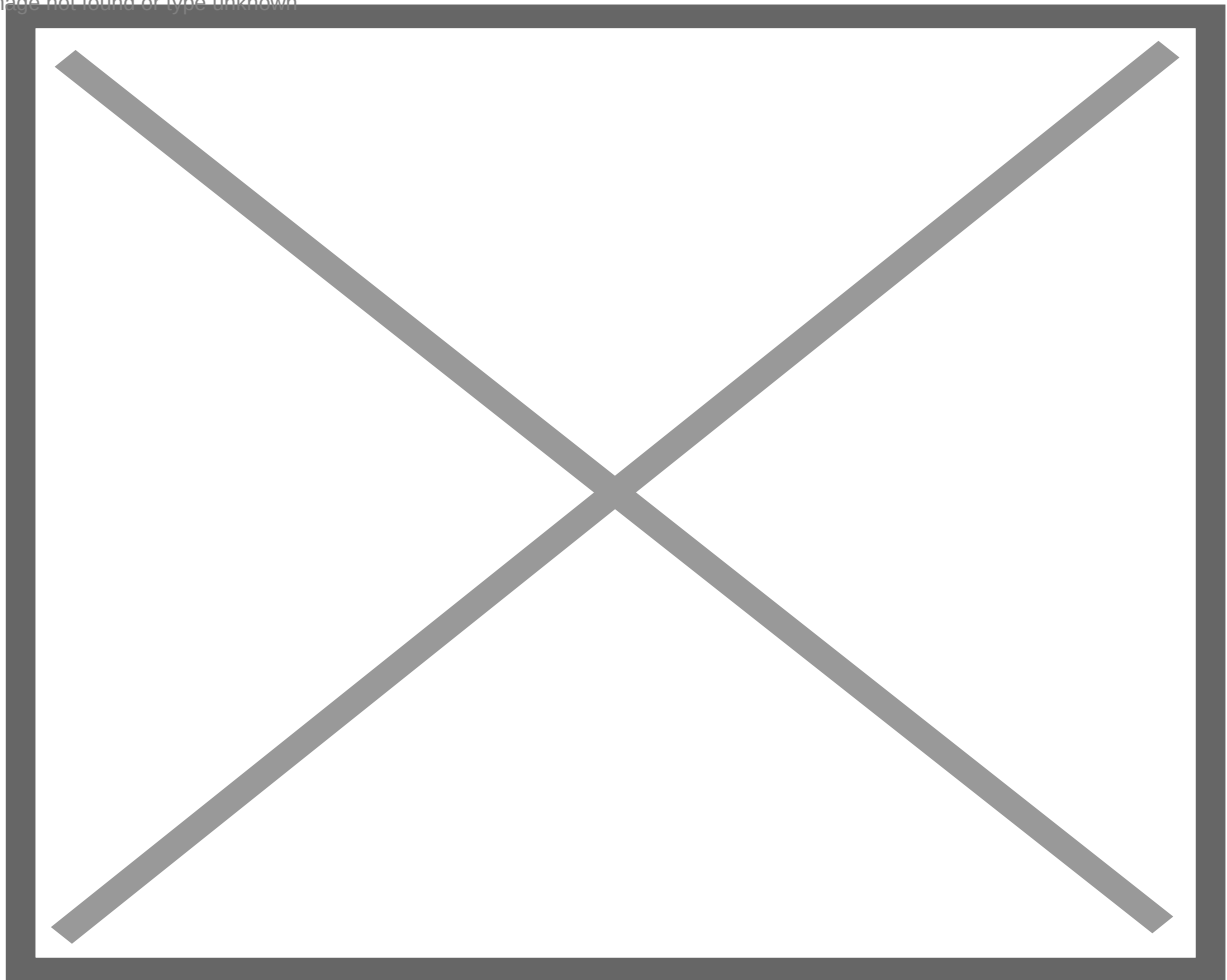
WAPA Issues Boil Water Advisory After E. Coli Detected in Frederiksted

WAPA says E. coli was detected twice at the Frederiksted Dock sample point, prompting a Tier 1 boil-water advisory. Customers should boil water for one minute or use bottled water for drinking, cooking, brushing teeth, making ice and washing dishes, too

Health / **Published On August 29, 2026 06:09 PM /**

Staff Consortium **August 29, 2026**

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Microscopic image of E. coli bacteria, the organism detected in Frederiksted drinking-water samples that prompted WAPA's boil-water advisory. Image is illustrative and not from the tested sample.

ST. CROIX — The V.I. Water and Power Authority has issued a Tier 1 Public Notification and boil-water advisory after E. coli bacteria were detected twice in drinking-water samples collected

from the distribution system at Frederiksted Dock, warning customers not to consume tap water without first boiling it for one minute or using bottled water.

The advisory remains in effect until further notice. WAPA said boiled or bottled water should be used for drinking, making ice, brushing teeth, preparing food and beverages, and washing dishes.

The first positive result came from a routine sample collected August 24 at Sample Point 327 at Frederiksted Dock, which tested positive for both Total Coliform and E. coli. Follow-up testing on August 26 again found both bacteria at the same location.

However, samples taken at the designated upstream location at Hannah's Rest and the downstream location at Frederiksted Ballpark tested negative for both Total Coliform and E. coli. Additional samples were collected August 28 from all three locations, with those results still pending when WAPA issued the advisory.

WAPA said low water pressure in Frederiksted can create conditions that increase the possibility of contaminants entering the distribution system, particularly where leaks, breaks or other vulnerabilities exist. The authority is investigating those conditions, including low or absent chlorine residuals, as it seeks to identify the source of the bacteriological concern.

The authority emphasized that the boil-water advisory is not related to the current Virgin Islands Waste Management Authority wastewater issue in Christiansted.

E. coli in drinking water can indicate contamination by human or animal waste, which may also introduce disease-causing organisms. WAPA said exposure to contaminated water can cause diarrhea, abdominal cramps, nausea, headaches and other gastrointestinal illnesses.

Infants, young children, older adults and people with severely compromised immune systems may face a greater risk of serious illness. WAPA advised anyone experiencing persistent symptoms to seek medical advice, while people at increased health risk should consult their healthcare providers about drinking water during the advisory.

In response to the positive results, WAPA has increased bacteriological sampling, is evaluating low or absent chlorine residuals, conducting flushing where appropriate, reviewing distribution-system conditions and coordinating with the V.I. Department of Planning and Natural Resources.

The advisory will remain in place until follow-up testing shows that the bacteriological concern has been resolved and WAPA, in coordination with DPNR, determines that it can be lifted. Until then, customers are being instructed to continue boiling water for one minute or use bottled water.

For additional information, WAPA listed Environmental Affairs Manager Andrew Jackson as the contact at 340-773-2250, extension 3038.