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## WAPA to Customers: Pay Bills Now to Avoid Large Outstanding Balances Later

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The Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority on Wednesday told its customers that while service disconnections are not taking place during the COVID-19 pandemic, it is necessary for electric and water utility bills to be paid.

The authority advised customers that they should pay now to avoid a large accumulated or delinquent bill once the pandemic emergency ends, and more normal operations resume.

On Wednesday, Executive Director Lawrence J. Kupfer said customers who remain current on their obligations to WAPA will not only avoid a large bill but having to enter an installment plan to satisfy any delinquent amounts while simultaneously maintaining their current bill. “Regular bill payment also affords WAPA the revenues needed to maintain its operations. I thank those

customers who paid their sixty-day bills issued last month, and I encourage those who took advantage of the installment plan to remain current on their obligations to the authority," said Mr. Kupfer.

Mr. Kupfer also said that WAPA will not impose a late fee for bills that are not paid by the due date during the pandemic. "Not only is WAPA not disconnecting service on delinquent accounts, we are waiving late fees during the declared state of emergency. We are keenly aware of the adverse impact that the novel coronavirus has had on the economy, on individual income, and, as a result, we have adopted protocols to assist our customers," he said. However, he reiterated that although service disconnects are suspended, the payment of bills is only deferred, and is still owed.

WAP said customers are once again encouraged to contact WAPA via telephone to conduct routine business with the authority, and to use the many convenient options available to make payments on accounts.

"Our preference is for customers to transact business on the telephone or online on the WAPA website. This will adhere with social distancing guidelines, avoid long wait periods and large crowds at banks, or at WAPA's customer service offices," Mr. Kupfer said.

WAPA said payment options include: Pay by Phone, Auto Pay, pay online at [www.viwapa.vi](http://www.viwapa.vi), depositing a check or money order in drop boxes located at Sunny Isle on St. Croix, The Marketplace on St. John, Port of Sale Mall on St. Thomas, and the self-service payment kiosks at Petrus Plaza on St. Thomas. Customers service representatives can be reached by telephone at 340-774-3552 or 340-773-2250 and selecting option 5.

Mr. Kupfer thanked the men and women of the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority who are on the front lines of engaging with the public during the pandemic, the linemen who maintain our electric grids, and the operators of our power plants and water distribution systems.

"I appreciate their daily effort, and the work of all other employees who tirelessly support the electric and water systems. We remain committed to the goal of providing electrical and water service to the people of the Virgin Islands in the most efficient, reliable, and affordable manner even as COVID-19 has challenged us as a people, and as we adopt to a new normal," he said.