

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Police To Residents: Don't Fire Shots In Air On Old Year's Night

Government / **Published On December 19, 2014 05:37 PM /**

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The Virgin Islands Police Department has issued a warning to residents of the territory, urging them not to fire shots into the air when the clock strikes 12 a.m. on January 1 in celebration of the New Year. Deputy Police Chief Arthur Hector, Sr. at a Tuesday press conference in Frederiksted noted that the VIPD has become increasingly concerned with the illegal practice.

"I want to talk about celebratory gunfire, and this is particularly on Old Year's Night/New Year's morning," Hector said. "I want to say again, we are begging, pleading, asking the public, community, individuals, whether they have legal or illegal firearms, not to fire shots in the air in celebration of New Year's Day. It is illegal, and most importantly, it is very dangerous."

Before going further into his remarks, the deputy chief first wished members of the community seasons greetings, and said he hoped everyone have a "safe, blessed and happy new year 2015." However, he went back into the pertinent discussion of firing shots into the air, and explained why the VIPD is concerned about the practice.

"We've had incidents in the past where rounds of projectiles have come back down from the air, gone through churches, gone through people's homes, and injured individuals," he explained. "So again, we are highly, highly asking that the public not discharge shots in celebrating New Year's morning."

The VIPD has also warned residents against texting and driving. Hector said although there is no law on the books in the Virgin Islands that prevents residents from the practice, it is one of the most dangerous things motorists could do while driving.