

The Virgin Islands Consortium

DPNR Issues Stop Use Order To Terminix After St. John Poisoning Incident, Mapp Issues Statement

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The Virgin Islands Department of Planning and Natural Resources (DPNR) has issued a Stop Use Order to Terminix, the company revealed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) spokesman Elias Rodriguez as responsible for the [St. John poisoning](#) incident that left a Delaware family vacationing on the island critically ill.

In light of the incident, Governor Kenneth Mapp met with Judith Enck, EPA regional administrator, and said he is confident the combined resources of the local government and the EPA will ensure a thorough investigation and satisfactory resolution of all issues raised.

David Adams, manager of the St. John operations for Sea Glass Vacations, issued a written statement Wednesday stating that Steve Esmond, who was joined by his wife, Dr. Theresa Devine, and their two teenage sons, rented the Capri for nine days, March 14 - 22. Esmond and his family stayed in an \$800-a-night suit.

The condo below the Esmonds' villa "was recently treated for pests by Terminix, however, Villa Capri itself had not been so treated," Adams wrote.

The Capri is one of 22 Sirenusa villas managed and marketed by Sea Glass Vacations.

Sea Glass "does not treat the unit it manages for pests but instead relies on licensed professionals for pest control service," the statement added. Adams referred all other questions to Terminix.

A spokesperson for Terminix said the company is "cooperating fully with local and federal officials to determine the cause of the incident reported in St. John. At this time, we have limited details so we cannot comment further."

The St. Thomas-based Terminix entire inventory of methyl bromide, the restricted pesticide that was contained in a pest control product, has been quarantined while local authorities and EPA personnel collaborate to determine how to remove and store it appropriately.

According to Government House, there is a concurrent investigation underway to determine how and where the product has been used elsewhere in the territory.

Members of the affected family are now being treated in the U.S., and are listed in critical but stable condition.

"The people of the U.S. Virgin Islands pray for the full recovery of the Esmond family. We will continue to do all that is possible to determine how this unprecedented event occurred, and to prevent it from ever happening in the future," Governor Mapp said. "Our residents and visitors," he added, "can remain confident in the quality and readiness of our healthcare services. For that, we are thankful."

Mapp also commended the volunteers of St. John Rescue for their efficient response to the emergency, and praised the medical and social services professionals at Schneider Regional Medical Center for providing the treatment necessary to stabilize the patients, and further providing for their expedited transfers to the U.S. mainland.