

The Virgin Islands Consortium

St. John Resort Poisoning Victims 'Not Doing Well,' VI Gov. To File Criminal Suit Against Terminix

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ST. THOMAS -- Governor Kenneth Mapp gave a status update on the family affected by the [Terminix poisoning](#) at a Sirenusa resort in St. John back in March, revealing that the condition of the family -- including the parents and two children -- have either deteriorated or remained the same, with only the mother seeing a slight improvement.

"Unfortunately, I have to give bad news, but the family that were the victims of the poisoning at Sirenusa is not doing well," Mapp said at a press conference at Government House this morning. "While the mom is doing more rehab and seems to be recovering better than the remaining parts of the family, the father is suffering with severe paralysis and for all intents and purposes, must be strapped even to sit."

On Wednesday, March 26, David Adams, manager of the St. John operations for Sea Glass Vacations, which is part of Sirenusa, issued a written statement 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.

Mapp said at the press conference that the oldest of the two sons remains paralyzed from the neck down, and although he is conscious and very much aware of his surroundings, he has no control of the movements of his limbs or body.

"The youngest child remains in-and-out of coma, and again is unable to have sensation in his limbs and to be able to control and move his body around and for all intents and purposes, the doctors do not expect any significant recovery from their present conditions," Mapp added.

The pesticide that Terminix used has been identified as Meth-O-Gas, which contains the heavily restricted methyl bromide, the chemical at the heart of the controversy. The indoor use of the pesticide, which can cause damage to the central nervous system and respiratory system, is illegal in both the U.S. and the territory.

The governor went on, making known that while the family hasn't filed suit against Terminix, they've retained counsel, "and it is in their right to do so," he said.

And in relation to the government's own action against the beleaguered pest-fighting firm, Mapp said his administration will file a criminal suit against the company, "for its irresponsible behavior at Sirenusa," and that the government will seek "full and unfettered recompense for its expenditures dealing with this issue," and "will assist the federal government in pursuing its criminal charges against the company."

Mapp said DPNR's report is almost complete, and soon the department's commissioner will transmit its report to the Department of Licensing and Consumer Affairs for its review, and to make a determination on whether Terminix's privileges to do business in the territory should be forfeited.

"So I ask the people of the Virgin Islands to keep the family in their prayers while they go through this most difficult period," Mapp said. "But the outlook and the prognosis is not good, and what Terminix International did is not a simple mistake; it's clearly an act to advance its profit motives by using substances that it knew, or should have known, were banned some 30 years ago."

Feature Image: The Capri in St. John is one of 22 Sirenusa villas managed and marketed by Sea Glass Vacations

Image Credit: Sea Glass Vacations Facebook page

