

The Virgin Islands Consortium

80 Percent Of St. Croix Will Have Power Tonight, Hugo Hodge Says

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ST. CROIX -- In a brief phone interview with The Virgin Islands Consortium, WAPA Executive Director Hugo Hodge said crews here have been proficient in their efforts to fully restore the island with power, however not all work will be completed tonight, estimating 80 percent coverage by day's end.

"St. Croix is about 70 percent restored," Hodge said, adding that crews were currently working in various locations, including Colquhoun and Mon Bijou, and that at the end of the night an assessment would be made to determine Saturday's course of action.

Hodge explained that during power restoration efforts, the most tedious work is usually left for last, which brings to the fore the reason some residents experience long down times.

"Usually, when you do restoration you get the first bank setup in good time but the last 10 percent can be really tedious work for limited returns, and the same work you may do today to get a hundred customers up, you may do the same 3-4 hour work tomorrow to get one or two customers up," Hodge said.

Nonetheless, Hodge said WAPA will "push through" and work until the entire island is restored by tomorrow, and will bring crews from the St. Thomas-St. John district if necessary, although he doubted the option would be needed and lauded WAPA crews here for what he deems exceptional work during Tropical Storm Erika.

And the director acknowledged the frustration of WAPA customers, and expressed a desire to "reunite" families through power restoration.

"We definitely understand," Hodge went on. "We're going to push hard and we apologize for the inconvenience, but we're going to get power restored in the fastest, safest manner."

Hodge confirmed that all of St. John was online, and said only 20 outages remained in St. Thomas, which would be completed by the end of Friday..