

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Power Restoration On St. Croix Continues Into Monday; Hodge Now Says Island "Close" To Completion

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ST. CROIX -- Last Friday evening in a brief phone interview with The Virgin Islands Consortium, the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority Executive Director Hugo Hodge Jr. said St. Croix was 80 percent restored with power and that the [full work would be completed by day's end on Saturday](#). Hodge's plan didn't pan out, however, and in a news briefing via telephone conference on Saturday evening, [he told journalists](#) that 90 percent of the island was restored and promised to complete all work by Sunday.

His plan failed yet again.

This time, Hodge is making no promises. The WAPA director's latest press release, issued in the wee hours of Monday morning, only acknowledged that by 11 p.m. on Sunday, when crews completed work for the night, all of St. Croix was "close to having full power." He explained that while most of the power would be restored, "there are some customers who have experienced damage to weather heads and other equipment at their homes which will prevent them from having their electricity immediately restored. There is also a subdivision on the island where poles simply cannot be replanted because of the water logged ground. We have to wait until the soil dries out a bit before we can bring in the equipment necessary to replant the poles and string new lines."

Hodge said crews are out primarily addressing various pocket outages across sections of St. Croix and are moving as quickly as possible.

"We have made significant progress Saturday and Sunday toward restoring the big volumes of customers and now the tedious task of addressing the smaller pockets begins," Hodge said, adding that areas such as the rainforest on the western end of St. Croix and sections of the eastern end of the island presented the bigger challenges in terms of the restoration.

The longtime WAPA boss estimated that more than 30 poles had been replaced across the island in the last two days. He also admitted that a lot of work would be required in the long-term even after the entire island is restored.

"We could be looking at more than double that figure—about 60 replaced poles---by the time the work is complete," Hodge said. "We will continue to address all reports of pocket outages that are received until we achieve 100% restoration," he concluded.

Persons who continue to experience a service interruption should report their outage information to 773-0150 or via the WAPA website at www.viwapa.vi.