

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Seventeen Beaches Not Safe This Holiday Weekend, DPNR Says

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ST. CROIX -- Seventeen of the territory's beaches are not safe for swimming and fishing this holiday weekend, the Department of Planning and Natural Resources has revealed through its weekly beach water monitoring program press release.

According to the release, the government agency performed water quality analysis at the 33 designated beaches throughout the territory during the week of October 26-30, 2015, and found that the following beaches **did not** meet water quality standards and are therefore not safe for swimming or fishing:

- **St. Croix:** Princess (Condo Row) Chenay Bay, Rainbow and Cane Bay.

- **St. Thomas:** Water Bay, Sapphire, Vessup Bay, Bluebeards, Secret Harbor, Bolongo Bay, Frenchman's Bay and Hull Bay.
- **St. John:** Oppenhiemer, Johnson Bay, Great Cruz Bay and Frank Bay.

The beaches DPNR tested and found to be **safe** are:

- **St. Croix:** Stoney, Ground Protestant Cay, Buccaneer and Cramer Park, New Fort (Ft. Louise Augusta), Dorsch, Frederiksted Public Beach, Pelican Cove (Comorant), Gentle Winds and Grapetree Bay.
- **St. Thomas:** Magen's Bay, Brewer's Bay, Lindbergh Bay, Lindquist and Coki point.
- **St. John:** Cruz Bay.

DPNR said Halfpenny on St. Croix could not be sampled this week due to the heavy presence of seaweed along the shoreline. Shoy's could not be accessed for sampling.

The release also made known that high levels of enterococci bacteria and turbidity may be caused by runoff due to heavy rains, heavy marine vessel traffic, high wave activity near the shoreline, irresponsible recreational use, etc. Runoff can consist of sediment, pesticides, animal feces and oil & grease, all of which are harmful to the waters of the territory.

The department, led by Commissioner Dawn L. Henry, says it will continue to monitor these popular swimming areas. DPNR also recommends that residents use their discretion when swimming or fishing at the designated beaches. If the waters appear muddy or murky or have foul odors, do not swim or fish.

For additional information regarding water quality, call the Division of Environmental Protection at 773-1082 in St. Croix.