

The Virgin Islands Consortium

St. Croix Residents On Feed #6 Sees Frequent Power Outages Following Heavy Rainfall

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ST. CROIX -- After a grueling few days attempting to maintain consistent service to St. Croix Feeder #6A, which serves customers from the Estate Richmond Power Plant to Mon Bijou, the Virgin Islands Water and Power line crews, along with contractor Asplundh, spent today bulldozing property, under and around the power lines, that is teeming with overgrown trees and brush, a press release WAPA issued late Thursday reveals.

Today's work concentrated on the areas in Salt River, where the abundance of overgrown brush makes assessing and repairing power lines extremely challenging, and is moving this evening to Estate St. John which is facing the same situation, according to

the release.

On Saturday, during inclement weather, service was interrupted to this feeder, along with Feeders 3A and 10B. After crews conducted an initial assessment of the distribution lines and found no impediments, service was restored to feeders 3A and 10B within 5 minutes. Tree limbs were found on a portion of power lines for feeder 6A, but they were removed and service was restored within 20 minutes. While the first two feeders held, feeder 6A once again lost service. Crews were again dispatched to conduct a more detailed assessment, in an effort to locate any further impediments. Additional tree branches were found on another portion of the power lines. Crews cut and removed the trees from the lines, and once again service restoration was attempted for the feeder.

St. Croix Line Superintendent Yauncey Milligan explained today that the recent rain has increased the foliage ten-fold, making it more challenging for the crews when they are out patrolling lines. After the brush was cut in Salt River, they were able to locate and repair a partially blown lightning arrestor, which has been a main factor in the constant service interruptions to feeder 6A.

That was, however, not the complete solution. As a protective measure, Milligan performed a switching order today (transferring over 1200 customers on feeder 6A to feeder 5A) to bring relief to the customers on 6A, and allow the linemen to continue assessing the power lines on the feeder. Late this afternoon, a portion of the feeder remained without service while crews continue the tree trimming operations in an effort to minimize the interruptions. It is anticipated that once these areas are cleared, a thorough assessment of all power lines on feeder 6A will be completed. Customers on the feeder will experience a vast improvement on the service they have been receiving over the past few days.

Hugo V. Hodge, Jr., WAPA's Executive Director said Thursday he is very mindful of the effect of the frequent electrical service interruptions to WAPA's customers since the weekend. He assured all customers that WAPA is working as quickly and safely as possible to restore full electrical service to the customers on feeder 6A.

In the areas where crews are bulldozing, WAPA is asking motorists to be vigilant and proceed cautiously through the work areas while we make every effort to restore service as soon as possible. For more information please call the Line Department at 773-0150 or email communications@viwapa.vi.