

The Virgin Islands Consortium

WAPA Says Cleanup Of Its Shoreline And Bay Area Complete After Oil Spill Incident

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ST. CROIX -- The Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority continued progress through the weekend and again today on the clean-up following last week's oil spill and the subsequent remediation efforts, a press release the semiautonomous entity issued late Monday has revealed.

Acting Chief Executive Officer Julio Rhymer said today that over the last three days WAPA and its contractor, VI Resource Waste Management, completed both the shoreline clean up and the cleaning of 40 boats in Christiansted harbor that were affected by the spill incident.

"Today, personnel from WAPA and its contractor focused more of the effort on continuing the cleaning and inspection of the various components of the oil / water separation equipment which became overwhelmed and led to the spilling of over 50 gallons of oil," Mr. Rhymer said. He explained that the cleaning and inspection of two separators and a coalescer took shape today as well as the flushing of various lines between the components.

Mr. Rhymer said he was pleased that the clean-up operation was to a point where the services of the National Resources Center were no longer needed and discontinued earlier today and that the Coast Guard had given WAPA approval to remove a hard containment boom out of the bay where the spill occurred.

"On Sunday, we removed absorbent booms and repositioned the hard boom closer to the pier to allow vessel traffic to the fuel dock. In fact, we anticipate another shipment of LPG to the Richmond facility this week," he said.

In addition to restoring the shoreline to its pre-spill condition, clean-up crews also fanned out on Saturday and Sunday across the park which sits to the west of the seaplane terminal removing numerous bags of trash and debris left by those who visit the park.

"While our crews were deployed along the shoreline, the volume of trash was quite noticeable. With the shoreline restored, our crews moved inland to collect the countless food wrappers and beverage containers strewn across the park," Mr. Rhymer added.

On Tuesday, the cleaning of a second separator is scheduled as well as returning one separator and the coalescing unit back to service. The hard containment boom is also expected to be retrieved tomorrow once the separation equipment is fully restored to service. The Coast Guard has required that the Department of Planning and Natural Resources inspect and give the green light to return the separation equipment to service once the cleaning process is completed.

"While the clean-up operations is in its final stages, we will focus our attention on what chain of events led to the equipment's failure on Thursday which resulted in the oil spill incident," Mr. Rhymer said.

Feature Image: Cleanup crew working to rid shoreline near WAPA in Christiansted of oil spill.

Image Credit: VIC.