

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Eight Beaches Not Safe This Weekend, D.P.N.R. Says

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Eight of the territory's beaches should not be used for swimming and fishing this weekend, according to a press release the Department of Planning and Natural Resources issued on Friday.

According to the release, Halfpenny on St. Croix, Lindbergh Bay, Brewer's Bay, Water Bay, Vessup Bay and Frenchman's Bay on St. Thomas, and Frank Bay and Great Cruz Bay on St. John did not meet water quality standards because testing found that they exceeded the established enterococci bacteria threshold and therefore are not considered to be safe for swimming or fishing.

The safe beaches far outweigh the unsafe ones this weekend, however, leaving residents with a variety of choices.

On St. Croix, the following beaches were deemed safe for fishing and swimming activities: Stoney Ground, Protestant Cay, Buccaneer, Cramer Park, New Fort (Ft. Louise Augusta), Dorsch, Frederiksted Public Beach, Pelican Cove (Comorant), Shoy's, Rainbow, Cane Bay, Chenay Bay, Princess (Condo Row), A – Mill Harbour Princess (Condo Row), B - Breezez and Grapetree Bay.

On St. Thomas, Lindquist, Coki Point, Bluebeards, Secret Harbor, Bolongo Bay, Sapphire Hull Bay and Magen's Bay are said to be safe by D.P.N.R. this weekend.

And on St. John, Oppenhiemer, Johnson Bay and Cruz Bay are good to go.

The government agency warns 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 and irresponsible recreational use, among other factors. It added that runoff can consist of sediment, pesticides, animal feces and oil and grease, all of which are harmful to the waters of the territory.

And even while D.P.N.R. continues to monitor the islands' waters, the agency stressed that residents should use their own discretion for fishing or swimming at the cleared beaches. If the waters appear muddy or murky or have foul odors, do not swim or fish, according to the release.

For additional information regarding water quality, call the Division of Environmental Protection at 340-773-1082.

Feature Image: Frank Bay, St. Thomas