

The Virgin Islands Consortium

W.A.P.A. Restores Power To St. Thomas-St. John District After Half-Day Outage

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ST. THOMAS -- Electrical service was restored to all of St. Thomas and St. John early Wednesday afternoon following a district-wide electric service interruption earlier in the day, the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority has announced.

W.A.P.A. Interim Chief Executive Officer Julio A. Rhymer, Sr. said Wednesday that a faulty switch used in conjunction with the waste heat recovery boiler triggered protection devices in the power plant, which took down two generators, Units 15 and 23.

“Water leaked into the switch causing a high energy fault which resulted in the protection devices sending trip signals to the appropriate breakers. This action tripped the two units

that were on line at the time, causing all feeders to fall off line resulting in the district wide service interruption," Mr. Rhymer said.

According to W.A.P.A., plant personnel attempted to restart a combination of other units that would provide enough generation capacity to restore service to the district. "We worked a combination of Units 14 and 25 to initiate the restoration process. We were then successful in bringing Units 15 and 23 on line to provide the capacity needed to complete the restoration," Mr. Rhymer said. Line crews worked closely with plant personnel to ensure that once generation capacity had been achieved, feeder restoration could immediately begin.

The restoration of service which began at mid-morning with the priority of restoring service to the hospital, schools, government facilities, the business district and eventually the residential communities was completed by early afternoon.

Mr. Rhymer apologized to the public for the inconvenience and thanked the men and women of W.A.P.A. who he said worked feverishly to restore power to the St. Thomas-St. John district.