

The Virgin Islands Consortium

WAPA Expected To Fare Well During Passage Of Tropical Wave, Rhymer Says

Community Center / **Published On August 24, 2016 09:36 PM /**

Staff **August 24, 2016**



The Executive Director and CEO of the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority, Julio A. Rhymer Sr. on Wednesday sought to reassure residents that despite a forecast for inclement weather -- primarily heavy rains and some gusty winds later today and tonight -- WAPA will maintain full generation and distribution of electrical power throughout the passage of the strong tropical wave and its associated weather, according to a press release the semiautonomous entity issued.

“Based on the forecast guidance from both VITEMA and the National Weather Service, our concern is primarily aimed at the well-being of our transmission and distribution system. While I expect that WAPA will maintain service, there is always a possibility that

high winds may topple trees, and heavy rains may cause tree branches and limbs to rest on power lines. This could adversely impact our distribution system,” Mr. Rhymer said.

According to the release, line department crews will be on stand-by in both districts to respond to calls for service, but the safety of the crews is of utmost importance. “The crews will go out and commence repairs once it is safe to do so. If weather conditions threaten the safety of the crew, repairs will be delayed until the inclement weather subsides,” Mr. Rhymer added.

WAPA is also urges residents to avoid contact with any downed lines, poles or other equipment that are part of the transmission and distribution system. “These lines may be energized and contact with them could be fatal,” Mr. Rhymer warned.

“Storm preparation is a year-round process at WAPA”, he added, noting that particular attention is paid to the six months of the Atlantic Hurricane Season, June 1 – November 30.

“We prepare for wind storms year-round, and prior to the start of the season we meet to discuss our level of preparedness and address any shortcomings in the emergency response plan. Just this past Monday we met with our directors and division heads to ensure all was in place in the event that the tropical wave intensified to a more robust storm system,” he said.

Persons experiencing isolated service interruptions should contact WAPA at 774-1424 on St. Thomas / St. John / Water Island and 773-0150 on St. Croix. Reports of service interruptions can also be emailed to WAPA, at communications@viwapa.vi.