

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Limetree Bay To Host Grand Opening Event This Weekend

VIC News / **Published On September 07, 2016 10:11 AM /**

Ernice Gilbert **September 07, 2016**



ST. CROIX -- Limetree Bay Terminals will host its official opening this weekend, with a private gathering happening on Saturday and a public affair, which will include fireworks, to be held on Sunday, The Virgin Islands Consortium has learned.

The roads leading to the facility are currently being paved as the company prepares for its official introduction as a contributing member to the territory's economy.

The September grand opening affair [was confirmed in June by Governor Kenneth Mapp](#), who also suggested during a press conference following his visit to China that ArcLight Partners, the parent company of Limetree Bay, would increase the amount of workers at

the oil storage terminal during the month of September, which is when work on 17 additional storage tanks was to commence.

The governor said in June that Sinopec -- a leading AA-rated Chinese state oil company traded in Hong Kong, Shanghai and New York worth about \$1.5 trillion, through its stake in the former HOVENSA refinery with ArcLight Partners, LLC — would bring hundreds of jobs to the Big Island through major investments in the south shore facility, including a substantial increase in oil storage and, importantly, oil refining.

“This morning I want to be measured to the people of the Virgin Islands as I announce that Sinopec has advised me that they’re going to make major, significant investments in the U.S. Virgin Islands,” Mr. Mapp said. He then revealed that Sinopec wants to increase the current oil storage capacity at the former HOVENSA site from its current 13 million barrels to “north of 50 million barrels” in 2-3 years, which would include the building of new storage tanks and other important work that calls for substantial additional manpower.

The governor said in June that Sinopec was reviewing the oil refining units at the refinery to determine its ability to function, “and literally to determine whether we can turn them on.” Mr. Mapp carefully noted, however, that his remarks were not to be construed as an announcement that refining at Limetree Bay was definitive.

“It is the company’s intention that some level of refining will be necessary at the St. Croix refinery. I do not want to be construed as announcing today that the company has made a decision to turn on the refinery,” he said. “But for all intents and from all our discussions, and all of their plans having to do with blending of crude, and the storage of crude — that there is a great possibility that the south shore refinery will, in fact, be restarted.”

The governor said Sinopec no longer wanted to use Very Large Crude Carriers (V.V.L.C.C.) at Limetree Bay, which holds 1 million barrels of crude oil; the firm wants to raise the stakes and instead use Ultra Large Crude Carriers, capable of holding 2 million barrels of oil. Through the operating agreement signed between the Government of the Virgin Islands and ArcLight Partners, ArcLight has committed to build a buoy system to facilitate major oil tanks. The project includes dredging the south shore, which currently is 50 feet deep, to 70 feet deep — enabling the accommodation of the ultra crude carriers.