

The Virgin Islands Consortium

St. Croix Beaches Not Tested This Week; Two St. John Beaches Unsafe, D.P.N.R. Says

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ST. CROIX -- The beaches on this island were not tested this week, the Department of Planning and Natural Resources made known via press release on Friday, without given an explanation regarding why it had not conducted its weekly examination of the waters here.

All the beaches in St. Thomas were tested, however, and were all cleared for swimming and fishing this weekend. They include the following: Lindquist, Coki Point, Vessup Bay, Brewer's Bay, Bluebeards, Secret Harbor, Bolongo Bay, Sapphire, Water Bay, Frenchman's Bay, Hull Bay, Lindbergh Bay and Magen's Bay.

The safe St. John beaches are Johnson Bay, Oppenhiemer and Frank Bay. The unsafe ones are Cruz Bay and Great Cruz Bay.

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, irresponsible recreational use, etc. Runoff can consist of sediment, pesticides, animal feces and oil & grease, all of which are harmful to the waters of the territory, says DPNR.

The department, led by Commissioner Dawn L. Henry, says it will continue to monitor these popular swimming areas. DPNR also recommends that residents use their discretion when swimming or fishing at the designated beaches. If the waters appear muddy or murky or have foul odors, do not swim or fish.

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

Feature Image: Frederiksted Beach. (Credit: Ernice Gilbert, VIC)