

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Waste Management Delays Tipping Fees

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ST. THOMAS -- The Virgin Islands Waste Management Authority on Friday announced that it was delaying the implementation of tipping fees -- a charge levied upon a given quantity of waste received at a waste processing facility -- basing its decision to delay on "ongoing improvements at the three receiving solid waste disposal facilities," according to W.M.A.'s Interim Executive Director Steven Aubin.

But Waste Management had come under pressure from lawmakers and residents alike, who decried the new fees as too sudden and even too costly. Senators Novelle Francis and Kenneth Gittens spoke openly about the matter, and Mr. Francis recently proposed legislation, which was forwarded to Governor Kenneth Mapp by the full Senate, calling for a delay in implementation.

According to Friday's release, the improvements at the three facilities include calibration of the scales, system updates, and site improvements to alert customers of traffic flow, facility rules, and the new fees. And the authority said it would host another series of meetings to provide updates on the projected implementation date, the fee structure, and the policies and procedures of the tipping fees.

The tipping fee per ton ranges from \$31.28 to \$65.26 depending on the type of material being disposed, W.M.A. says. Once implemented, the fees will be levied and collected from all solid waste haulers and other direct customers that deliver solid waste to the three W.M.A. disposal facilities, including the St. Croix Transfer Station, the Bovoni Landfill in St. Thomas and the Susannaberg Transfer Station in St. John.

According to W.M.A., each load of solid waste delivered will be weighed and categorized at the waste disposal facilities' scale house upon arrival. The fees will be calculated based on the type of waste delivered and the weight of the load. If a customer has less than 1 ton to dispose, while the units of the fee are in tons, the rate will be converted to pounds to apply the appropriate charge.