

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Only Rainbow Beach Is Unsafe This Weekend, D.P.N.R. Says

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ST. CROIX -- The Department of Planning and Natural Resources made known via press release on Friday that all beaches in the territory, except one, were safe for swimming and fishing this weekend.

The one beach that did not meet water quality standards because it exceeded the established enterococcibacteria threshold, and was therefore deemed unsafe for swimming and fishing is Rainbow Beach on this island.

All other areas are a go. They include the following:

On St. Croix, they are: Stoney Ground, Protestant Cay, Buccaneer, Cramer Park, New Fort (Ft. Louise Augusta), Dorsch, Frederiksted Public Beach, Pelican Cove (Comorant), Shoy's, Cane Bay, Chenay Bay, Princess (Condo Row), A – Mill Harbour, Halfpenny, Princess (Condo Row) and B – Breezes Grapetree Bay.

On St. Thomas, they include: 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.

And on St. John, the safe beaches are: Oppenhiemer, Johnson Bay, Frank Bay, 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.