

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Seven Beaches Not Safe This Holiday Weekend, D.P.N.R. Warns

Community Center / **Published On November 10, 2016 11:23 PM /**

Staff **November 10, 2016**



The Department of Planning and Natural Resources is warning residents to steer clear of seven of the territory's beaches in its weekly beach advisory press release, as we head into the Veteran's Day holiday weekend.

The unsafe beaches, which were deemed high-risk because they did not meet water quality standards considered safe for swimming and fishing based on high levels of enterococci bacteria, are Hull Bay, Lindquist and Bluebeards in St. Thomas, and Great Cruz Bay, Johnson Bay, Oppenhiemer and Frank Bay in St. John.

All St. Croix beaches were cleared as safe for swimming and fishing this weekend.

The safe beaches in St. Thomas are: Coki Point, Secret Harbor, Bolongo Bay, Frenchman's Bay, Sapphire, Magen's Bay, Lindbergh Bay, Brewer's Bay, Vessup Bay and Water Bay. In St. John, only Cruz Bay was cleared as safe.

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 D.P.N.R.

The department, led by Commissioner Dawn L. Henry, says it will continue to monitor these popular swimming areas. D.P.N.R. 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: Bluebeards Beach, St. Thomas

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