

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Only Two Beaches Not Safe This Weekend

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The Department of Planning and Natural Resources announced its weekly beach advisory via press release on Friday.

While most beaches were deemed safe, two of the 34 beaches tested this week -- Brewer's Bay and Magen's Bay in St. Thomas -- were categorized as unsafe for swimming and fishing, as they failed to meet the water quality standard considered safe.

All other waters were cleared as safe, including the following:

On St. Thomas, they include: Lindquist, Coki Point, Vessup Bay, Bluebeards, Secret Harbor, Bolongo Bay, Sapphire, Water Bay, Frenchman's Bay, Hull Bay and Lindbergh 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.