

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Three Beaches Not Safe For Swimming And Fishing This Weekend, D.P.N.R. Says

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The Department of Planning and Natural Resources announced Friday that while most of the territory's beaches that it tested met conditions safe for swimming and fishing, three beaches -- New Fort (Ft. Louise Augusta) and Grapetree Bay on St. Croix, as well as Oppenhiemer on St. John -- were not cleared as safe because they exceeded the established enterococci bacteria threshold. Above, an aerial shot of Magen's Bay in St. Thomas, deemed as safe this weekend.

All other waters the department tested were cleared for swimming and fishing.

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

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: 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.