

The Virgin Islands Consortium

DPNR Says 11 Beaches Are Not Safe This Weekend

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The Department of Planning and Natural Resources on Friday made known that 11 of the 34 beaches it tested territory-wide between June 5-9 were not safe for swimming and fishing this weekend, because they exceeded the established enterococci bacteria threshold considered as safe.

The unsafe beaches in St. Thomas are Brewer's Bay, Coki Point, Hull Bay, Water Bay, Secret Harbor, Frenchman's Bay and Bluebeards. In St. John, the unsafe beaches are Great Cruz, Bay Johnson and Bay Cruz Bay.

Only one beach on St. Croix was deemed unsafe this weekend: Protestant Cay.

D.P.N.R. said all other beaches were good to go, including the following:

St. Croix: Stoney Ground, Buccaneer, Cramer Park, New Fort (Ft. Louise Augusta), 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 Grapetree Bay.

St. Thomas: Bolongo Bay, Lindquist, Magen's Bay, Sapphire, Vessup Bay and Lindbergh Bay.

And St. John: Oppenhiemer and Frank 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.