

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Only Two Beaches Not Safe This Weekend

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The Department of Planning and Natural Resources announced on Friday that only two beaches were not safe for swimming and fishing this weekend. All other tested waters were good to go.

D.P.N.R. said Water Bay and Bluebeards -- both in St. Thomas -- were deemed unsafe because they exceeded the established enterococci bacteria threshold. The tests were performed between June 19-23. D.P.N.R. said 37 beaches were examined.

All other beaches were good to go. On St. Croix, they are: Cramer Park, Pelican Cove (Comorant), Rainbow, Chenay Bay, Cane Bay, Stoney Ground, Frederiksted Public Beach, Dorsch, Princess, Condo Row, Shoy's, Halfpenny, New Fort (Ft. Louise Augusta),

Columbus Landing, Spratt Hall, Buccaneer, Protestant Cay and Grapetree Bay.

In St. Thomas, the safe beaches are: Bolongo Bay, Lindquist, Magen's Bay, Frenchman's Bay, Secret Harbor, Vessup Bay, Sapphire, Lindbergh Bay, Brewer's Bay, Coki Point, Hull Bay and Morningstar Limetree.

And in St. John, the beaches deemed safe are: Great Cruz Bay, Johnson Bay, Cruz Bay, 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.