

The Virgin Islands Consortium

All Beaches Cleared As Safe This Weekend For Swimming And Fishing By D.P.N.R.

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The Department of Planning and Natural Resources have cleared all the territory's beaches as safe for swimming and fishing this weekend, paving the way for beach lovers in both districts to choose from a range of places to go.

The beaches, 35 in total, were tested between July 17-21, and were cleared as safe because they did not exceed the established enterococci bacteria threshold considered safe.

In St. Thomas, the beaches are: Bolongo Bay, Lindquist, Magen's Bay, Vessup Bay, Water Bay, Bluebeards, Secret Harbor, Frenchman's Bay, Sapphire, Lindbergh Bay, Hull

Bay, Morningstar, Limetree, Brewer's Bay and Coki Point.

In St. Croix, the beaches are: Cramer Park, Pelican Cove (Comorant), Rainbow, Chenay Bay, Cane Bay, Stoney Ground, Frederiksted Public Beach, Dorsch, Princess, Condo Row, Shoy's, Halfpenny, Spratt Hall, Protestant Cay, Columbus Landing, New Fort (Ft. Louise Augusta) and Buccaneer. Grapetree Bay was not sampled due to heavy presence of seaweed on the shoreline. Therefore, the water quality at that beach is unknown, D.P.N.R. said.

In St. John, the beaches are: Cruz Bay, Oppenheimer, Great Cruz Bay, Frank Bay and Johnson 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.