

The Virgin Islands Consortium

WAPA Says It's In 'Good Shape' In Terms Of Preparation For Hurricane Irma

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As Hurricane Irma tracked closer to the Caribbean region on Saturday, Virgin Islands Water & Power Authority Executive Director Julio A. Rhymer, Sr. said the public utility is in good shape in terms of the preparations of its power plants and electrical and water distribution systems should Irma threaten the Virgin Islands, W.A.P.A. announced Saturday night.

“Over the last several days, we have been tracking the developing storm system, Hurricane Irma. Aside from regular discussions about the storm’s possible threat with officials at V.I.T.E.M.A. [Virgin Islands Territorial Emergency Management Agency], our management team has had readiness meetings with our on-site contractors about

potential demobilization and work stoppage. We have also had discussions with our LPG terminal operators, VITOL, about their preparedness plans," Mr. Rhymer said.

Other preparations have been specific to the two power plants, in Krum Bay on St. Thomas and at Estate Richmond on St. Croix. "Our plant personnel have ensured there is an adequate supply of fuel required to generate electricity and are confident with the state of the two power plants to maintain functionality and be in a position to quickly resume power generation once a storm has passed," Mr. Rhymer said.

Mr. Rhymer noted that the authority remains in a state of readiness at all times for not only wind storms but any man-made or natural disaster that may impact W.A.P.A.'s facilities. "We continue to regularly review our emergency plans to ensure all is go for any response and recovery that may be required in the aftermath of a storm system befallen the territory," he said.

Mr. Rhymer said more specific messaging about W.A.P.A.'s operations during a storm, recovery of service after a storm incident and general safety reminders for the public will be issued as conditions warrant. "Right now, we are watching this powerful hurricane and preparing to launch our storm operational plan as circumstances require," he said.