

# The Virgin Islands Consortium

## WAPA Wants To Be 60 Percent Less Dependent On Oil By 2025; Latest Update Released

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Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority Executive Director Julio Rhymer told U.S. Senate members of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources on Tuesday that WAPA has committed to reducing its dependency on oil by 60 percent by 2025, adding that the utility has made strides in accomplishing its goal.

"In recent years, as oil markets became less stable resulting in fluctuating oil prices, WAPA began a process of diversifying its 100 percent dependency on fuel oil. In fact,

WAPA made a public commitment to reduce its reliance on fuel oil by 60% by the year 2025. The Authority has met some success with this diversification strategy. In recent years, we have implemented up to 15 megawatts of net metering, and through public private partnerships have added more than eight megawatts of solar power to the electric grid through solar facilities on St. Thomas and St. Croix," Mr. Rhymer said.

Below, the latest restoration update.

## **ELECTRIC SYSTEM**

- Reconstruction and restoration work continued across the territory Tuesday with service to more residential customers being restored and additional primary circuits reconstructed.
- On St. John, crews continued work to prepare the George Simmonds Terrace area for service restoration. Some customers past Sirenusa, and in Cruz Bay were restored while crews developed primary circuits on the north shore of the island and along various areas near Calabash Boom. New composite poles, capable of withstanding sustained winds to 200 miles per hour, are being installed on critical primary transmission circuits in both districts, and in Coral Bay.
- On St. Croix, more customers near Sion Hill on Feeder 4A were restored. On Feeder 8B, approximately 70% of customers in Frederiksted town have been restored. On Feeder 5A, work in Estate Ruby is about 30% complete and in Barron Spot the completion is estimated at 55%. On Feeder 9A, primary circuits near One Love service station were energized, while construction of a primary circuit from the power plant in Estate Richmond to The Home Depot will be completed later this week. The Village Mall was restored on Tuesday.
- On St. Thomas, crews continued to work in Estate Mandahl while some customers in Bovoni, Old Tutu, Smith Bay and Bordeaux were restored. Crews are working from the Louisenhoj Castle toward Peterborg via the Magen's Bay Road.
- Over the next few days, crews will normalize Feeder 8A and energize primary circuits on Feeder 10B to the bottom of Donkey Hill, plant several poles on the roadway leading to the Sea View nursing home. Crews will also work to repair existing underground cables near the Cyril E. King Airport terminal to facilitate the restoration of service to the airport cargo building and the nearby V.I. Waste Management Authority's wastewater treatment facility. Through an agreement reached with the Department of Planning & Natural Resources, WAPA will restore electrical service to homes with temporary roofs (blue roofs) once a licensed electrician has certified, in writing, that the structure is safe to energize.
- Customers and electricians are reminded that it is against the law to remove or otherwise destroy meter seals. If work needs to be done to repair a damaged meter base and/or weather head, customers must call the Emergency Call Center at 340-774-1424 on St. Thomas-St. John or 340-773-0150 on St. Croix. The call centers operate seven days a week, 9 am – 5 pm.
- If your electric meter was removed by WAPA personnel to facilitate repairs to either a meter base and/or weather head, once repairs are completed and a licensed electrician certifies the work in writing, customers are required to contact the Customer Service office to ensure that the meter will be reinstalled and resealed prior to the restoration of electrical service. All fees usually associated with meter removal and reconnection have been waived. Customer service offices are

operating Monday-Friday, 9 am – 4 pm at Sunny Isle on St. Croix and Port of Sale Mall on St. Thomas.

- Reconstruction, restoration and hurricane debris removal crews are deployed across the islands. Motorists are asked to exercise caution when driving through the work areas and to heed the directions of flaggers, military personnel and VIPD officers who are assisting with traffic control.
- WAPA urges residents to shut off standby generators when line crews are in your neighborhood restoring electrical service. A standby generator has the potential to back feed electricity to the grid which poses a severe safety risk to restoration crews.

### **POTABLE WATER SYSTEM**

- There are six days of emergency water storage on St. John, eight days on St. Thomas and five days on St. Croix.
- WAPA urges clean-up contractors and homeowners in both districts to exercise caution when piling debris on and around potable water meters. There are a growing number of instances where water meters are being damaged by clean-up equipment grading debris and causing damage to the roadside water meters. The continued damage by heavy equipment poses difficulty in maintaining or restoring potable water service to customers.

### **OTHER INFORMATION**

WAPA telephone contact: St. Thomas – St. John district, 340-774-3552; St. Croix district, 340-773-2250

Customer Service Offices are operating Monday – Friday, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. at Sunny Isle on St. Croix and at Port of Sale Mall on St. Thomas

The latest information on the restoration effort is available on the WAPA website, [www.viwapa.vi](http://www.viwapa.vi) and on Facebook: Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority.