

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Letter To The Editor | 30 Percent Of Lorraine Village Homes Are Still Without Power

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Staff **January 31, 2018**



For many of our Virgin Islands residents, hurricanes Irma and Maria felt like an atrocious dream. Unfortunately, the sad reality is those two Category 5 hurricanes unleashed their “punishing fury” on our lovely Virgin Islands. I commend the first responders, off and on-island lineman, the clean-up crews, various foundations for relief items and also our local and federal governments for their bravery and swift action in ensuring protection of our people and our island.

The restoration of electricity to our homes, schools and businesses were extremely critical to our progression and the opportunity to return to our normal state of being. It has been four and a half months since those dreadful hurricanes caused a minor setback to

our island homes. WAPA's goal of 90 percent of power restoration before Christmas 2017, was highly commendable. I watched the linemen work early mornings in the blazing sun everyday including Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day and also on New Year's Day.

WAPA made frequent announcements of their restoration policy via their website, local radio stations, newspaper columns and also via Facebook. The press release stated "Customers are advised to make repairs to damaged weather heads and meter bases as soon as possible. Repair damaged weather head or meter base now to avoid a delayed restoration of service." There was and still is no way around dealing with a damaged weather head -- either it is repaired or replaced. It is 4 ½ months and Lorraine Village apartments, located in Mount Pleasant/Grove Place, does not seem to be honoring the memo. To this day, 30 percent of the livable homes in that housing community are still without power.

The damaged weather heads are still sitting near the buildings on the grass in the dirt appearing in the same position hurricane Maria left them. The people of this housing community are voiceless! Though the residents feel compelled to use their voices, they have a fear of being reprimanded by the housing community's management. This letter to the editor is the only medium residents feel comfortable using. The management has had very little communication with its residents. Interestingly, the subject of payment for rent is top priority.

Management, please communicate with your residents. Give them a timeline on how much longer it will take before the weather heads arrive on island and when they will be installed and reconnected to homes. Unfortunately, many residents cannot afford and maintain a generator. Buying ice and burning candles has become extremely excruciating. When will there be comfort to infants, children and the elderly who have to shower at the break of dawn and late afternoon in freezing cold water? Management, please communicate with residents. Please bind the miscommunication; residents are beyond vulnerable and have been very patient.

Submitted today by a concerned Lorraine Village resident, whose name The Consortium will withhold.