

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Kmart Pays \$11,400 Penalty To DLCA For Price Discrepancies Following Hurricanes Irma And Maria

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The Department of Licensing and Consumer Affairs (D.L.C.A.) said on Friday that it received a penalty payment of \$11,400 from Kmart, after the retailer allegedly failed to post sale prices on multiple items along with several discrepancies with pricing, according to D.L.C.A. The department did not say whether the violation was from the St. Croix or St. Thomas-St. John District Kmart.

"The department continue to serve notices of violation to all who have violated consumer rights and we anticipate that our normal occurrences will be accompanied by new violations," said Devin Carrington, D.L.C.A. commissioner. "We are encouraging business from now to come up with ideas to provide remedies to the numerous issues we

will be serving them on. It will soon become too costly to violate consumer rights. In fact, we see with our recent success that certain businesses understand that there is just no way to defend certain business practices."

D.L.C.A. said department stores and retail establishments are mandated by law to be licensed in the U.S. Virgin Islands. All licensees are aware of their terms and conditions, which detail their obligation to safeguard consumers and operate as fairly and honestly as possible. The violation made by Kmart, D.L.C.A. said, is specifically prohibited in the consumer code.

[In October](#), Mr. Carrington said the department had started to take action against the out-of-control price gouging that had been ongoing in the territory following Hurricanes Irma and Maria. The announcement, which came over a month after Maria badly damaged St. Croix, and six weeks following Irma's devastation on St. Thomas, was welcomed by residents, who had been sharing their grievances — and pictures to back them up — concerning retailers who had gouged everything from generators to snacks.