

The Virgin Islands Consortium

WAPA Restores Power To St. Thomas Following District-Wide Outage

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ST. THOMAS -- A series of tripped generating units at the Randolph Harley Power Plant on St. Thomas Wednesday left the district without electrical service for more than two hours, the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority has announced.

The generation capacity challenges unfolded at approximately 2:15 pm when two of three units powering the islands tripped, causing service interruption to more than 14,500 customers, WAPA said. Plant personnel was able to restart one of the units, restoring service to customers on all but two feeders when, just before 4 pm, all units tripped causing a district-wide service interruption. Plant personnel worked for the next couple of hours to make repairs to some units and restart others, according to the utility.

WAPA said that shortly before 6:30 pm with one unit on-line, service restoration began and was completed by 7:50 pm. Three units are now on-line. A failed gas detector caused the initial trip of the generating units on Wednesday. The cause of the second trip of the units will be determined after data files and alarms from the units are more closely scrutinized.

A transformer fire at the electrical substation on St. John will leave customers on that island without electrical service until at least Thursday evening. WAPA's System Planning staff is working to untie the Ridge Road feeder from one of the St. John feeders to allow for customers on Ridge Road feeder to be restored tonight. The feeders were initially tied due to operational failures at the East End substation which prevented the Ridge Road feeder from being re-energized after the 2017 hurricanes.