

The Virgin Islands Consortium

7 Beaches Not Safe For Swimming And Fishing This Weekend, D.P.N.R. Warns

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The Department of Planning and Natural Resources announced on Friday that seven beaches it tested during the course of the week proved unsafe for swimming and fishing this weekend, while some were unable to be tested. *Above, Sargassum seaweeds overwhelm the shores of Columbus Landing.*

The unsafe beaches are Coki Point, Water Bay, Sapphire and Bolongo Bay on St. Thomas; Rainbow Beach and Columbus Landing on St. Croix; and Great Cruz Bay on St. John.

Beaches that were not sampled include Stony Ground, Princess Condo Row and Grapetree Bay on St. Croix, along with Frenchman's Bay on St. Thomas.

The safe beaches territory-wide are:

St. Croix: Cramer Park, Shoy's, New Fort (Ft. Louise Augusta), Buccaneer, Chenay Bay, Halfpenny, Dorsch, Frederiksted Public Beach, Cane Bay, Pelican Cove (Comorant), Protestant Cay and Sprat Hall.

St. Thomas: Lindquist, Magen's Bay, Secret Harbor, Lindbergh Bay, Brewer's Bay, Hull Bay, Vessup Bay and Bluebeards.

St. John: Frank Bay, Cruz Bay, Oppenheimer and Johnson Bay.

D.P.N.R. said high levels of enterococci bacteria and turbidity may be caused by runoff due to heavy rains, heavy marine vessel traffic, high wave activity near the shoreline, irresponsible recreational use, etc. Runoff can consist of sediment, pesticides, animal feces and oil & grease, all of which are harmful to the waters of the territory.

The agency says it will continue to monitor these popular swimming areas. D.P.N.R. also recommends that beachgoers use their own discretion when swimming or fishing at the designated beaches. If the waters appear muddy or murky or have foul odors, do not swim or fish.

For additional information regarding water quality call the Division of Environmental Protection at 773-1082 on St. Croix.

Feature Image: Sargassum at Columbus Landing in Salt River earlier this week. (Ernice Gilbert, VIC)