

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Three Men, Dressed In Lineman Gear, Rob Family Of Wrangler, Cash, Credit Cards And Other Belongings

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ST. CROIX -- A St. Croix family residing on the north shore was connived into allowing access to their home on Tuesday afternoon and subsequently robbed of their belongings -- including a vehicle and cash, among other items -- by three armed men, V.I.P.D. Public Information Officer Glen Dratte announced Thursday.

The men attired themselves in lineman gear resembling contractors working for the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority and Viya. One of the men knocked on the door of the house, located in La Vallee, and once it was opened by the adult male occupant, the men said they were in search of a meter, giving the occupants the impression that they were WAPA meter readers.

But once inside, the intruders pointed guns at the family and demanded the location of a perceived safe. They also asked for cash, credit cards and other items, according to Mr. Dratte. The suspects stole the victims' cash, credit cards, three mobile phones, driver's licenses and personal documents, according to police.

They then forced the suspects to lie on the ground and proceeded to flee the scene with the victims' 2015 copper brown Jeep Wrangler, according to Mr. Dratte.

Police provided the following descriptions of the suspects:

- One is said to be slim and tall (6 feet, 2 inches), has a sparse beard and is of a dark complexion. At the time of the robbery, he wore a yellow hard hat.
- The second suspect is believed to be 5 feet, 10 inches tall, whose face was covered. He wore a blue jeans pant during the incident.
- The third suspect is said to be a short individual between 5 feet, 2 inches and 5 feet, 4 inches tall. He, too, wore a blue jeans, along with a pair of black Nike shoes. As with the second man, this suspect's face was covered.

All brandished handguns, according to police.

A V.I.P.D. representative reached out to WAPA and Viya officials to confirm their employees and the employee identification process of the contractors hired by the local firms, Mr. Dratte said. WAPA's executives stated that all employees and contractors doing business on the authority's behalf possess photo identification which should be displayed to verify the employment of the individual. The authority said residents who are in doubt should demand that the contractors' employees show an identification prior to being admitted to a home or office.

Additionally, all employees and contractors working in the field use vehicles bearing either WAPA's logo or that of the contractor working on WAPA's behalf, the utility said.

VIYA's CEO Alvaro Pilar stated that all the telecommunication firm's employees, to include contractors, carry identification. He also said that all vehicles used by these employees carry the Viya logo.

In light of the incident, the V.I.P.D. is urging residents to be careful of the persons that are allowed access to your home -- even if these persons bear resemblance of WAPA, Viya or other contract workers in the territory working on recovery efforts.

Feature Image: The Wrangler stolen at the south shore residents on Tuesday afternoon. (Credit: Lucien Downes)