

The Virgin Islands Consortium

3 Beaches In St. Thomas Not Safe This Weekend

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Three beaches in St. Thomas were deemed unsafe for swimming and fishing this weekend by the Department of Planning and Natural Resources (DPNR), which cited high levels of enterococci bacteria that exceeded the threshold considered safe as the reason.

The unsafe beaches are: Coki Point, Lindquist Beach and Water Bay.

The department did not test the following waters: Columbus Landing, Stoney Ground, Princess Condo Row and Grapetree Bay on St. Croix; Frenchman's Bay on St. Thomas; and the beaches in St. John. D.P.N.R., as has been the case for some time, did not explain in its release why it was unable to test the beaches that it failed to examine.

All other waters were deemed safe by the department, including the following:

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

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

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.