

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Heavy Smoke Emanating From Anguilla Landfill Forces Closure; Some Port Authority Employees Sent Home For The Day

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ST. CROIX -- Steady, large plumes of smoke from a Sunday morning fire at the Anguilla Landfill, forced the closure of the facility on Monday, the Waste Management Authority (W.M.A.) said in a release.

Yesterday, [the authority said](#) the mulch fire ignited at 3:00 a.m. Sunday, and that W.M.A. and Virgin Islands Fire Service personnel had been working to quench it. Today, the authority said the work was continuing.

The smoke has been pushing west, and has been affecting the Henry E. Rohlsen Airport. One employee of the airport told The Consortium early Monday that the smoke's smell was affecting workers' performance, but airport officials said operations would continue. Damian Cartwright, Virgin Islands Port Authority (V.I.P.A.) executive director, told The Consortium today that the airport's fire department was monitoring the smoke, however airport operations would not be affected. Mr. Cartwright said wind directions change often and suggested that V.I.P.A. officials were hoping the wind would send the smoke away from the airport.

However, Monifa Braithwaite, the authority's public information officer, told The Consortium that V.I.P.A. Executive Director David Mapp allowed some V.I.P.A. employees to be sent home. Mr. Mapp said he had no control over airline employees or those of other tenants at the airport. Mr. Mapp also directed the port's firefighters to actively monitor the situation.

Calls placed to W.M.A.'s communications management went to voicemail.

Department of Planning and Natural Resources Commissioner, Dawn Henry, said in a Monday release that residents downwind of the smoke, which as of Monday morning was west of the island, should take precautionary measures, especially the elderly, children, and persons with respiratory ailments, allergies and compromised immune systems. Ms. Henry said D.P.N.R.'s Division of Environmental Protection, Air Quality Management Program would monitor the situation and advise the public of any changes.

A video recorded by The Consortium Monday morning shows large, incessant plumes of smoke emanating from the landfill. The fire was said to be ignited in a hurricane-related mulch pile at the entrance of the facility, and not the landfill itself.

[View the original embedded media](#)