

The Virgin Islands Consortium

New York Power Authority Discusses Developing Solutions To Reoccurring Power Outages With WAPA Officials

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Not only does the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority charge the most for electricity in all of the U.S. and its territories, the authority is also one of the most unreliable, with residents losing power multiple times a week in various parts of both the St. Thomas-St. John and St. Croix Districts regularly.

The problem was at its worst a week ago, when [WAPA initiated rolling blackouts](#) on September 6. That day alone, various parts of the St. Thomas-St. John District had lost power about four times. An island-wide power outage also affected the district.

“Until those repairs are completed, and there is enough electrical capacity to restore all customers, WAPA will engage a one-hour rotation schedule at 8:30 pm as follows: service will be restored to Feeders 6A, 7A, 7C, and 8A. During the rotation schedule, the following feeders will be off-line: 6B, 7B, 7E, 9C, and 10B. Should the repairs not be completed by 9:30 pm, another hour of rotating outages will be in effect. An update will be provided by 9 p.m.,” the authority said on the evening of Sept. 6 as it initiated rolling blackouts.

Realizing that its failure to provide reliable service had grown considerably worse, the authority said it [called on the New York Power Authority](#) for technical assistance.

In a followup release, WAPA said leaders of both authorities had met ahead of developing solutions.

“Working alongside WAPA operations personnel, the NYPA team will gather relevant technical and historical information in an effort to determine the root cause of the power disruptions and come up with both short and long-term plans to address the identified issues,” said Executive Director Lawrence J. Kupfer.

“I assure our customers that everyone at WAPA understands the frustrations that the repeated outages have caused. For all of us at WAPA, having one customer without electrical service, is one customer too many. The men and women of the Authority are working each day to resolve these challenges and return WAPA to providing reliable electric service to our customers. We now have subject matter experts from NYPA available to us to remedy these challenges. We will keep the public updated on the progress we are making,” he said.

Governor Albert Bryan has said he shares the frustration of residents and the business community.

“This issue continues to be a top priority for our administration. We fully understand how the disruptions have impacted homes, workplaces, schools and particularly our residents with sensitive health concerns,” he said. “We are tirelessly working with WAPA towards establishing more reliable and efficient power generation and have been assured that the immediate challenges confronting the authority are solvable. We are grateful to our technical partners like the New York Power Authority for their immediate and emergency assistance toward the much anticipated solutions to these problems.”