

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Reconstruction of Electrical Substation in Estate Nazareth On St. Thomas Coming Along Steady, WAPA Says

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ST. THOMAS -- WAPA is reporting steady progress on reconstruction of a new electrical substation in Estate Nazareth in the East End of St. Thomas. Contractors poured a concrete roof last week, advancing a project that promises to make electrical service more reliable in East End communities and on St. John, WAPA said in a release on Wednesday.

The substation is designed to transform voltage levels between high-power transmission lines and lower voltage distribution lines to homes and businesses. WAPA operates

seven substations territory-wide.

This particular substation was battered by the 2017 storms, and has been inoperable since.

Using FEMA funding, WAPA is replacing the damaged facility with a poured concrete structure to protect it from future storm damage. In addition, a control and protection room will also be built to allow for safe operations by engineers and technicians.

“This project will increase reliability and prevent further switchgear failures at the East End substation. The complete loss of the facility two years ago has placed an increased strain on the power system,” WAPA Chief Executive Lawrence Kupfer said in a written statement on Wednesday.

The substation was damaged in the 2017 hurricanes, and when completed early next year, will restore normal electric grid operations to the eastern end of St. Thomas, and to the island of St. John.

“Without the substation in Estate Nazareth, the electrical transmission system to St. John is being provided by the Tutu substation, and by the Donald Francois substation in Long Bay. Distribution feeders, which provide residential electrical service, are being provided by other substations,” Mr. Kupfer said.

Once reconstruction is completed, the East End substation will provide service to St. John and to the East End, including critical facilities such as the V.I. National Guard Armory, Montessori School, Ivanna Eudora Kean High School, Food Center, Port Authority Red Hook facilities, American Yacht Harbor, Ritz Carlton Resort, Bovoni Landfill, Bovoni Commercial Center, Bureau of Internal Revenue headquarters, DPNR Division of Fish & Wildlife, National Park, Homeland Security, and VIPD facilities.