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Limetree Bay Suddenly Stops Providing Data Showing Number of Active Covid-19 Cases Recorded at Facility

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Data provided by Limetree Bay of active Covid-19 cases confirmed at the facility was suddenly removed from the company's website, leaving residents blind to the Covid-19 situation at the south shore facility. By. LIMETREE BAY WEBSITE

ST. CROIX — Limetree Bay, the south shore facility that refines oil and hosts a storage terminal, which in July [was the site of a major Covid-19 outbreak](#) on St. Croix, has suddenly stopped providing data relative to the number of people who tested positive at the facility and are currently recovering. The abrupt removal of data follows Consortium reporting on disparities between the data provided by the V.I. Dept. of Health and Limetree Bay relative to the number of active Covid-19 cases on St. Croix.

When we first reported on the discrepancies, D.O.H. [said](#) the numbers were different because "Limetree counts every test even if one person gets tested multiple times. We count each person only once. For example, if one person has tested negative 5 times, on our report it counts as one person being negative." But the health department's response did not answer why positive cases listed at the time by Limetree Bay and D.O.H. varied so drastically. In fact it begged the question whether D.O.H. wouldn't count a positive case after a person had tested negative multiple times. To that query, D.O.H. said, "That is not correct. We have not had a LTB employee test positive, then negative, then positive."

Again, the second response wasn't satisfactory, as Consortium did not ask about persons who may have tested positive, then negative. The department later said that its count updates daily, and that Limetree Bay "may need to update theirs as they connect with us weekly to get an update."

The matter became more pointed following comments by Health Commissioner Justa Encarnacion on Sept. 14, when she D.O.H.'s numbers were the most accurate and that the department would ask Limetree Bay to convey as much on its website.

"Our numbers are valid," she said during the administration's Covid-19 update press briefing on Sept. 14., [defending D.O.H.'s data](#). "We are asking them [Limetree Bay] also to submit something on their website that indicates the Department of Health has the most accurate data and the most timely data, because we update our data on a daily basis. And so we will work with them carefully and closely to ensure that the numbers are accurate as well as the disclosure that our numbers are accurate."

At the time, Limetree Bay's website was showing a total of 11 active Covid-19 cases which were recorded at the facility, while D.O.H. showed 4 for all of St. Croix.

Limetree Bay, for its part, responded by stating it "firmly stands behind its consistent and transparent reporting of information to the D.O.H. and to the public." The company added that it would "continue to provide information daily to the D.O.H. and will continue to work with the Government of the Virgin Islands and the D.O.H. to help curtail the spread of the COVID-19 virus."

Since then, however, Limetree Bay has stopped providing data showing active Covid-19 cases — which the facility vows is accurate — leaving residents blind to what is actually going on relative to Covid-19 at the refinery and oil storage terminal.

A message below the now-vague data says, "Per the state of health emergency executive order, please refer to D.O.H. for additional data."

