

CHS to Open Monday Following Three Days of Closure; Education Says Source of Odor Identified and Eliminated

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The Dept. of Education hired contractors last week to clean clogged sewers the department identified as the source of a foul smell that plagued the Central High School.
By. Dept. of Education

ST. CROIX — Central High School will resume regular operations on Monday with bus service, following the flushing of sewer lines on and near the campus, and other corrective actions to eliminate a gaseous odor that closed the school for three days last week, the Dept. of Education has announced. The department said it had identified the clogged sewer lines as the source of the odor. The unpleasant smell had caused teachers and students to exit classes to protect their health on Wednesday.

According to D.O.E. St. Croix District officials, all clean-outs and manholes were inspected on the Central High campus. As a precaution, the Maintenance Division capped exposed PVC clean-outs on the school's 900 Wing, and a banana grove at the northeast end of the 1000 Wing was uprooted and disposed of, as it was thought the root structure may have caused sewage lines to collapse, D.O.E. said.

A private contractor was brought in to thoroughly flush sewer lines on the Central High campus through those at the St. Croix Curriculum Center. Blockages were encountered and unclogged between manholes #3 and #5. Additionally, it was discovered that manhole #2 did not have an odor knocker, an apparatus used for odor control in manholes. The Maintenance Division used foam to seal around that manhole cover.

The operation was monitored by the Waste Management Authority, which deposited a Cree Breeze solution in each manhole to minimize odors from escaping, the department said.

In addition to Waste Management, other external agencies worked closely with the Department of Education to identify the cause of the odor, including Department of Health division of Environmental Enforcement and Department of Planning and Natural Resources division of Environmental Protection.