

The Virgin Islands Consortium

D.P.N.R.'s Division of Fish and Wildlife Reopens Red Hook Office After Sargassum Accumulation

Community Center / **Published On November 27, 2019 05:36 AM /**

Staff Consortium **November 27, 2019**



Boom with Sargassum By. The Dept. of Planning and Natural Resources

The Department of Planning and Natural Resources announced Tuesday that the Division of Fish and Wildlife's (D.F.W.) Red Hook office location at 6291 Estate Nazareth has now re-opened.

A Sargassum accumulation along the shores of St. Thomas impacting the Red Hook community closed the office temporarily this year, D.P.N.R. said. The Sargassum was mitigated through deployment of a boom in Vessup Bay. An air quality monitoring system is operational in the office to monitor environmental conditions, according to D.P.N.R.

D.P.N.R. said the entire Caribbean region is experiencing increased landings of Sargassum annually, particularly during the months of May - September.

Sargassum blooms off the shore of South America are becoming more common since 2011 due to increases in sea water temperature and changing currents pushing Sargassum into the Caribbean region, according to D.P.N.R. Sargassum washed ashore may decay and emit a foul odor. The foul odor is caused by levels of Hydrogen sulfide which can corrode metals and turn them black, damaging appliances and pipes.

Any member of the public experiencing nausea, tearing of the eyes, headaches, drowsiness, poor memory, coughing, loss of smell, or dizziness should immediately remove themselves from the area and seek professional medical treatment, the department warned.

Exposure to hydrogen sulfide around Sargassum debris should be treated seriously as a medical emergency.

For more information contact Nicole F. Angeli, Acting Director of the Division of Fish and Wildlife at (340) 773-1082 nicole.angeli@dpnr.vi.gov.