

Police Find Decomposing Body Wrapped in Garbage Bag in Shallow Grave in St. Thomas

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ST. THOMAS — The V.I. Police Department Friday afternoon found a body that was already decomposing wrapped in a garbage bag in a recently dug, shallow grave in Smith Bay.

The incident was reported at about 4:25 p.m. by a resident who told police that a foul odor was emanating from the surrounding area, V.I.P.D. Public Information Officer Toby Derima told the Consortium Friday night. The Consortium was first made aware of the incident by a source with knowledge of the matter.

When police arrived to the area, officers searched the bushes near the resident's house, where a fresh, shallow grave was discovered with a body placed in a garbage bag that was tied with cloth, according to Mr. Derima.

V.I.P.D. Commissioner Ray Martinez told the Consortium that the police department suspects foul play. "We definitely suspect foul play," he said. The commissioner said the identity or gender of the victim had not been determined as it was kept in the garbage bag for evidentiary purposes. He said more information would be forthcoming later Saturday.

Though foul play is suspected, the V.I.P.D. has to perform an autopsy before making a final determination. The incident has not been classified a homicide.

Elsewhere on Friday, [separate incidents](#) left three shot and one dead, and one man beaten and badly burned. Officers have been actively investigating these incidents, the commissioner said, adding that more information will be provided as the cases develop.