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# Port Hamilton Says Smoldering at Coke Dome Extinguished; Company Provides Details on 3-Phase Refinery Startup Plan

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**The Limetree Bay Headquarters on St. Croix. By. V.I. CONSORTIUM**

Port Hamilton Refining and Transportation said Monday that the smoldering coke at the refinery's coke storage dome that was detected on August 4 was extinguished twenty-two days later on August 26. The company also provided details on its plans to restart refining.

In response to Senator Kenneth Gittens, who chairs the Senate Committee on Economic Development and Agriculture and had [given PHRT executives until Monday](#) to furnish details on restart efforts, the company described how it managed to get the smoldering coke under control. "The process used to accomplish this was to first saturate the coke with water, then to remove part

of the material in the dome to make room for heavy equipment to alternatively spread the coke pile and apply water to cool the coke," PHRT said in the letter which was provided to the media by Mr. Gittens.

Relative to the restart of oil refining, PHRT said the effort will be accomplished in three phases:

- Phase 1: Topping operation Consist in the startup of the No 5 Crude and corresponding equipment.
- Phase 2: Hydro-skimming operation Consist in the startup of the Reformers, Distillate Desulfurizers, and associated equipment. The start -up of phase 2 will follow the market demand and completion of Phase 1; startup date has not been defined.
- Phase 3: Heavy Oil operation (Coker Unit) Consist in the start- up of the Coker unit depends on the market and completion of Phase 2 operation.

PHRT also said that air monitors continued to operate during the smoldering coke incident. "All five offsite air monitoring stations continue to operate during the smoldering coke event, and no adverse impacts were recorded," it said. "Both the Department of Planning and Natural Resources and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency visited the site and Port Hamilton continues to update the DPNR and the EPA of its activities associated with the coke. No further actions have been requested from these agencies."