

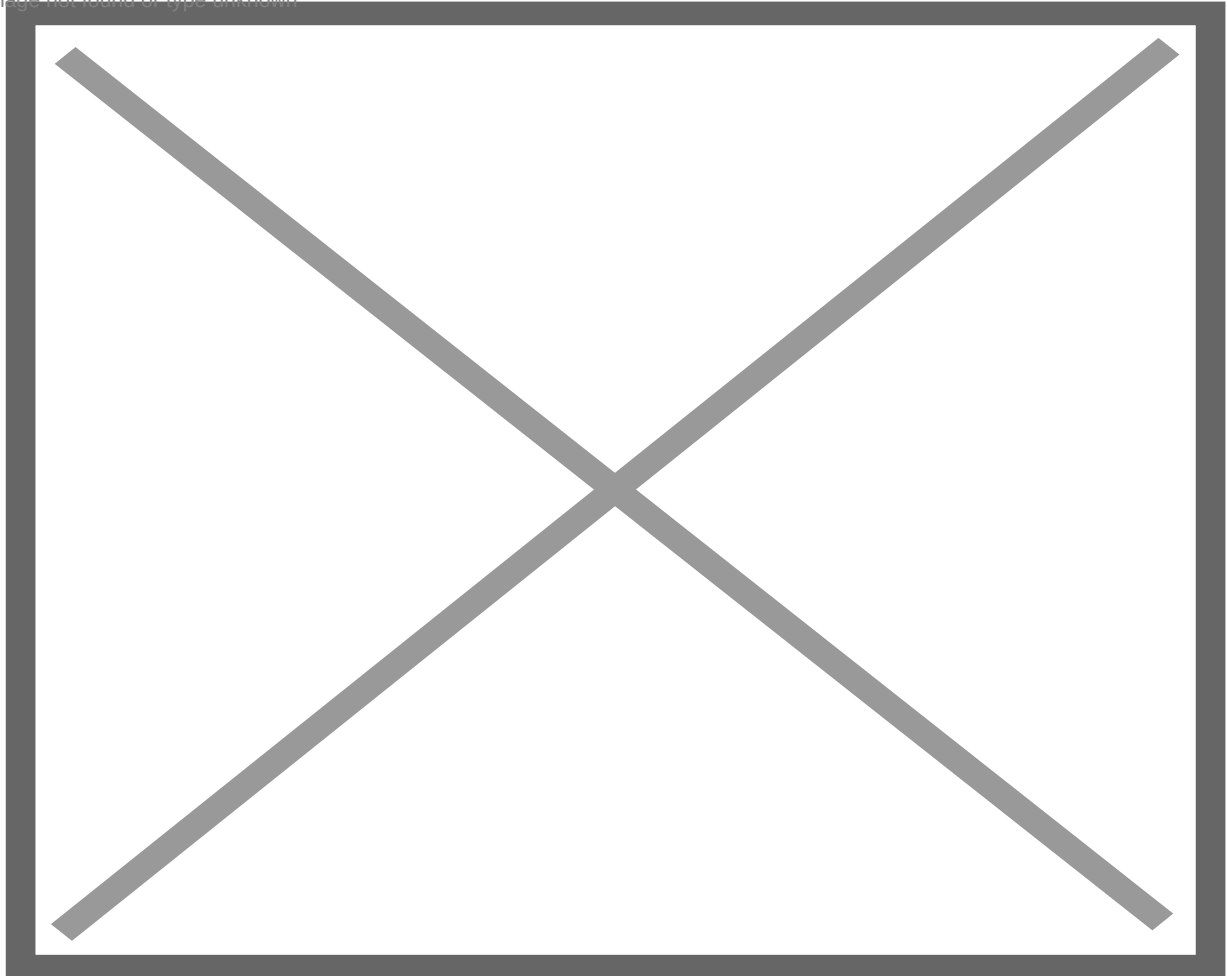
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Potential Environmental Hazards as Oil Containers Dumped Near Creque Dam

Community Center / **Published On June 22, 2023 06:37 AM /**

Staff Consortium **June 22, 2023**

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Oil containers were discovered dumped on the creek bed near Creque Dam on Wednesday, June 21, 2023.

ST. CROIX — Concerns have been raised over potential environmental hazards as approximately eight oil containers were discovered dumped on the creek bed near Creque Dam, according to St. Croix Administrator Sammuel Sanes.

The dry condition of the creek bed is currently preventing immediate spread, but with the hurricane season underway, there is a growing apprehension that rainfall could lead to the pollutants contaminating downstream areas of the island. The V.I. Waste Management Authority has been notified.

Mr. Sanes expressed cautious optimism, noting that the dry weather is currently working in favor of containing the oil. However, he emphasized the need for close observation and vigilance in anticipation of possible rainfall over the next few days. With two weather systems potentially affecting the U.S. Virgin Islands, there is a heightened risk of water spreading the pollutants and exacerbating the environmental impact.

The dumping of oil containers near the creek bed poses significant risks to the delicate island ecosystem. Oil spills can have detrimental effects on marine life, plants, and overall ecological balance. The toxic substances in the oil can contaminate water sources, making them unsafe for consumption and endangering the health of both humans and wildlife.

The environmental impacts of oil pollution include suffocation of aquatic organisms, disruption of natural habitats, and long-term damage to the ecosystem's biodiversity. Oil can cling to the feathers of birds, impairing their ability to fly and affecting their insulation properties, which leads to hypothermia. It can also accumulate in the sediments, affecting bottom-dwelling organisms and disrupting the food chain.

The V.I. Waste Management Authority will coordinate cleanup efforts and ensuring proper disposal of the oil containers.

The island community is urged to report any suspicious activities or environmental violations to the relevant authorities.