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Health Department Embarks on Phase 2 of Charles Harwood Complex Demolition

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The V.I. Dept. of Health has commenced Phase 2 of the Charles Harwood Memorial Complex demolition. By. V.I. DEPT. OF HEALTH

The V.I. Department of Health on Thursday commenced Phase 2 of the demolition of the Charles Harwood Memorial Complex, staying on track to complete the work by the first quarter of 2024.

According to the department, Phase 2 includes the Annex Building, which at one time served as the island's hospital and later housed various DOH offices. Phase 2 is expected to be complete within two weeks.

In May of this year, Lemartec completed Phase 1 of the demolition which included the Old Club House and two other buildings located at the northeast corner of the campus. The third and final

phase of the demolition is the facility's main building.

"Today is another step forward for progress," said Health Commissioner Justa Encarnacion, who was on-hand for the start of the demolition. The commissioner was accompanied by Assistant Commissioner Reuben Molloy and Rosalinda Browne, Disaster Recovery Specialist.

Dr. Donna Christian Christensen, for whom the rebuilt facility will be named, also joined Ms. Encarnacion, as well as David McFarlane, USVI Director for Lemartec, the company hired to complete the demolition work.

"It's really an extremely special honor for me to be here today as we begin to deconstruct a place that holds so many memories for me, for Tita (Justa Encarnacion), and for so many Crucians," Dr. Christensen said. "It's an unexpected honor, a humbling honor, and a lot of excitement around it though, being able to be a part of today's initial start and to watch Charles Harwood as it blossoms into a new health facility to bring health and wellness to this community."

According to DOH, no blasting is planned during the demolition and mitigation measures have been implemented to include privacy and dust screens around the work areas, the use of a water dust suppression machine and wind direction monitoring. Lemartec has also developed a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan and will use best management practices such as silt fencing, storm drain sediment covers and track-out prevention, and will monitor and prepare for inclement weather, DOH said.

The health department said it has also taken steps to minimize disruption of daily activities of the nearby school, businesses, and traffic in the area.

The Charles Harwood Memorial Complex was severely damaged in the 2017 hurricanes and was one of the first projects deemed replaceable by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. FEMA awarded the territory \$291 million for the reconstruction of the complex, which will be built to current national construction codes and standards. DOH said it spent several months working through the local approval processes, including a historic preservation review.