



THE VIRGIN ISLANDS WATER & POWER AUTHORITY CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS NEWS RELEASE

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October 10, 2023



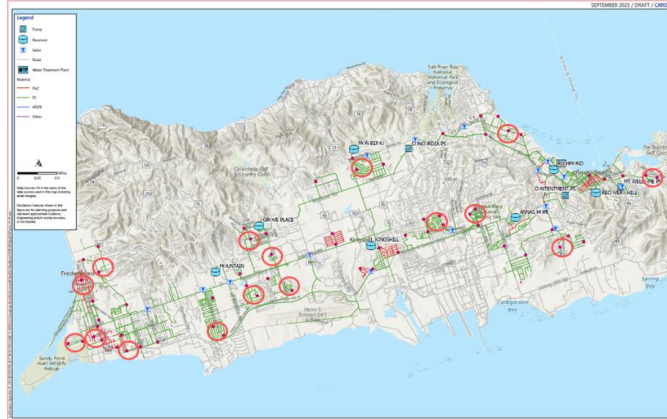
Figure 1: (Left to right in safety vests) George Patrick, DPNR DEP Assistant Director; Randa DeSuza, WAPA Environmental Laboratory Supervisor; Stanley L. Latesky, PH.D., UVI Professor of Chemistry and Chairman of Chemical and Physical Sciences; Julio Navarro, WAPA Water Specialist and Ikim Blackett, WAPA First Class Lab Technician. Photo by Zeno Bain, Environmental Protection Agency, Caribbean Environmental Protection Division, USVI Sustainability Advisor – Environmental Engineer.

Authority Announces Reddish-brown Water Sampling on St. Croix has Concluded

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS – As efforts to address St. Croix’s reddish-brown water continue, the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority (“WAPA” or “Authority”) would like to announce the successful completion of the initial round of the extended water sampling plan in collaboration with key partners, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Department of Planning and Natural Resources (DPNR) and the University of the Virgin Islands (UVI).

As part of the project, sampling was conducted at 65 locations across the WAPA water distribution system, including the 16 priority neighborhoods previously identified as the most impacted areas (see map below). The teams working on analyzing the samples will convene over the coming days and expect to present the results to the community, so that the community is aware of the outcome and next steps. This multi-agency effort is one of the steps in a near-term plan to address reddish-brown water across the island of St Croix. Collaborators will be working to review the results and develop a community-wide response plan.

“This is an important and vital response from WAPA, DPNR and UVI to address the public outcry due to the concern of red and brown water,” said Commissioner Jean-Pierre L. Oriol of DPNR.



Samples were divided up amongst partnering labs. WAPA conducted a full battery of tests, including bacteria, pH, chlorine levels, turbidity, phosphate, and iron level analysis. UVI conducted bacteria tests and collected samples that were sent to the EPA Region 2 lab in New Jersey to test for 13 metals regulated by EPA National Primary Drinking Water Regulations. The results of these three labs should be completed within the next 1-2 weeks. Once the results are available, EPA, DPNR and WAPA will publicize the information and recommendations to the community. Additionally, on Wednesday, October 11, 2023, from 10am-1pm the Authority will be hosting an information session in front of Fort Frederik to provide resourceful handouts to community members and answer customer questions related to brown water concerns.

"We are immensely proud and grateful for the collective dedication and unwavering commitment demonstrated by the local and federal agencies involved in addressing the discolored water on the island of St. Croix," states Andrew Smith, CEO and Executive Director of the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority. "The collaborative efforts are invaluable in our mission to provide quality water to our valued customers. The Authority remains steadfast in its commitment to delivering clean and reliable water services to the community."

The Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority Communication's department is committed to reaching, informing, and connecting with the youngest members of the community to the eldest, through meaningful, transparent and effective communication.

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About WAPA: The Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority is an autonomous agency of the Virgin Islands Government which produces and distributes electricity and drinking water to residential and commercial customers in the territory. WAPA was created by the Fifth Legislature of the Virgin Islands in 1964 through Act No. 1248. Today, WAPA generates electrical power at production plants on St. Thomas and St. Croix and distributes electrical service through smart grids to customers on St. Thomas, St. Croix, St. John, Hassel Island, and Water Island. Potable water is distributed to almost 13,000 customers through water lines and standpipes. WAPA also has the responsibility of installing and maintaining streetlights.

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