



THE VIRGIN ISLANDS WATER & POWER AUTHORITY  
CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS  
**NEWS RELEASE**

(340) 774-3552 • [communications@viwapa.vi](mailto:communications@viwapa.vi) / [www.viwapa.vi](http://www.viwapa.vi)

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**Bill Credit for St. Croix Customers in Neighborhoods Previously Identified with Lead in Water**



Image: Chief Executive Officer and Executive Director Andrew Smith

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS – The Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority (“WAPA” or “Authority”) announces bill credits to St. Croix water customers in areas affected by the previously reported presence of lead and copper. Approximately 2400 accounts will receive the three-month credit subsidy which totals \$75. The credit amount reflects the average customer’s water usage of \$25/month. The full credit amount will appear on bills beginning on January 5, 2024, the next billing cycle and will roll over on the account until the full amount of \$75 has been used.

“As part of our Clean Water Action initiative, this water credit and our recent water voucher distribution aim to lessen the financial impact on those who have been affected. We assure the public that we will continue to take the necessary actions to restore its trust in the water system,” noted CEO Smith.

Faucet and pitcher filters are also on order and customers who have been identified as eligible, including customers in the town of Frederiksted, will be notified of distribution as soon as they arrive. St. Croix Director of Water Don Gregoire reassured customers that “we have not lost sight of the continuing concerns about reddish-brown water in our system and mitigation is ongoing to relieve that

situation. Additional fire hydrants have been installed in strategic locations to assist with flushing the lines to reduce stagnant water which can cause discoloration from the aged iron pipes.”

The Corrosion Control program is also being reviewed by the water department. The local lab team on St. Croix, with additional on-site support last week from nationally-certified water treatment experts, is continuing to evaluate the water quality. With anticipated results from the Corrosion Control program in just a few months, a revised water treatment plan can significantly improve water quality. In the long term, WAPA has received a \$1 billion FEMA-approved grant to replace St. Croix’s entire potable water distribution system and was provided a \$30M sub-award to contract master planning and conceptual design. To maximize the accuracy of reconstructing the water system, a hydraulic model was built to determine which aspects of the current system need to be brought to industry standards.

A hydraulic model uses computer software to simulate the flow of water within piping systems. In potable water distribution systems, this involves modeling the pumping stations from the water treatment plants and distribution to the customers.

As part of its outreach efforts to educate the public, WAPA will be hosting a virtual business townhall on Wednesday, December 20, at 10:00am via Zoom and Facebook livestream following the recent community townhall hosted by the Environmental Protection Agency last Wednesday. To stay updated on efforts to continue providing relief to our water customers, please visit [www.cleanwaterusvi.com](http://www.cleanwaterusvi.com).

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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.

(340) 774-3552 (STT/STJ) • (340) 773-2250 (STX) |  Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority |  @VIWAPA