



THE VIRGIN ISLANDS WATER & POWER AUTHORITY
CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS
NEWS RELEASE

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**WAPA IDENTIFIES CAUSE OF ELECTRICAL SERVICE INTERRUPTIONS IN
THE ST. THOMAS – ST. JOHN DISTRICT THIS WEEKEND AND TODAY**

The cause of four electrical service interruptions which affected customers in the St. Thomas - St. John district Saturday afternoon, early Sunday morning, and earlier today has been determined.

The outages occurred shortly before 4 p.m. Saturday afternoon, just after 1:30 a.m. on Sunday, and at 2:10 a.m. and shortly before 7 a.m. today. In all instances, customers on St. Thomas, St. John, Water Island and Hassel Island were affected.

On Saturday afternoon, a faulty fire detector in a WAPA-owned generator led to the shutdown of the unit, a cascading effect on other dispatched units, and a subsequent district-wide service interruption. Utilizing other generating units, plant personnel rebuilt capacity to restore electrical service to all customers shortly after 8 p.m.

A fatal automobile accident in the Estate Nazareth area Sunday morning caused damage to a WAPA pole as well as to aerial transmission lines. When the lines were damaged, there was an adverse effect on the Tutu electrical substation which interrupted service to customers on the east end of St. Thomas and the island of St. John.

"Due to the rapid loss of a large volume of electrical demand when breakers at the substation tripped, the power plant became unstable. One of the dispatched unit's protection schemes reacted to the plant's instability which resulted in its falling offline," said Clinton T. Hedrington, Jr., Chief Operating Officer of Electric System. He said when Unit 23 tripped, other dispatched units also fell offline leading to a major service interruption in the district. Plant personnel spent about an hour shoring up power plant operations and later commenced restoration of service to customers. All customers were fully restored shortly after 4 a.m. Sunday.

Line Department crews returned to the accident site on Sunday morning to make temporary repairs to the damaged electrical equipment. Customers on a portion of Feeder 9C experienced an approximate 90-minute outage Sunday while the repairs were underway.

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.

On Monday morning, a failure of equipment at the hurricane-damaged Donald Francois Electrical Substation resulted in a district-wide outage. Plant personnel rebuilt generation capacity to facilitate the restoration of service to all customers shortly before 6 a.m. About an hour later, the high voltage breaker on a dispatched unit tripped and it subsequently fell offline. Two other units remained online allowing plant personnel to more quickly restore service to the affected customers.

Additionally, repairs were completed at the Francois electrical substation and the facility was returned to service. By early afternoon, the electric grid was normalized.

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