



THE VIRGIN ISLANDS WATER & POWER AUTHORITY CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS NEWS RELEASE

Jean P. Greaux, Jr.
Director of Corporate Communications
(340) 774-3552 ext. 2147 or (340) 244-7330
communications@viwapa.vi / www.viwapa.vi

May 24, 2021

FIRE ON DOUBLE-CIRCUIT POLE IN SUBBASE RESULTED IN DISTRICTWIDE ELECTRICAL SERVICE INTERRUPTION SUNDAY NIGHT

Electrical service was restored to all customers in the St. Thomas - St. John district at approximately 9 p.m. Sunday following a district-wide service interruption.

The outage resulted from a pole fire which destroyed circuits associated with two electrical feeders, 7A and 8A, and sent an electrical surge back to the Randolph Harley Power Plant causing dispatched generators to trip.

The fire on the double-circuit pole in Subbase, just south of Nisky Shopping Center and north of Gramboko Hill, tripped the two feeders at 6:52 p.m. Sunday and approximately ten minutes later, the subsequent power surge began affecting plant operations.

While power plant personnel restarted the generators and rebuilt production capacity, line department crews worked to isolate the burned pole, which eventually snapped and toppled over. The isolation was required to reconfigure portions of the electric grid and enable restoration of all customers on Feeders 7A and 8A Sunday night. Restoration of electrical service to customers began at 7:55 p.m.

Electric system crews will return to the site of the compromised pole today to determine what factors may have contributed to the fire and begin the process of planting a new pole, replacing equipment and restoring the circuits of both feeders. Once completed, the electric grid will be returned to its normal configuration. The restoration work is not expected to affect electrical service.

Firefighters from the V.I. Fire Services assisted WAPA in extinguishing the pole fire last night.

###

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.