



THE VIRGIN ISLANDS WATER & POWER AUTHORITY CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS NEWS RELEASE

(340) 774-3552 • communications@viwapa.vi / www.viwapa.vi

WAPA Addresses Underground Cable Faults Following Heavy Rainfall

ST. CROIX, U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS - November 19, 2024 – The Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority (“WAPA” or the “Authority”), with support from an outside contractor, is working to resolve two underground cable faults that caused power outages in Downtown Christiansted this weekend. The unexpected electrical outage primarily affected customers on King Street, Company Street, Queen Street, and Hill Street.

The damage was triggered by the excessive rainfall over the past week, which caused flooding in manholes and completely submerged underground powerlines, leading to the failures. While power was restored to most affected customers by 8:00 p.m. last night, St. Mary’s School remains without power as crews continue to repair the underground transformer.

Efforts to complete the repairs and restore service have been delayed by the need to pump water out of the manholes to safely conduct repairs and by material shortages affecting the availability of critical parts.

Underground power systems offer many benefits over above-ground poles, including greater resistance to wind damage and improved aesthetics. However, this work can be complex, particularly when faced with issues such as flooding. To reduce the risk of flooding in manholes, WAPA is exploring preventative measures, including scheduling maintenance and management for low water levels after heavy rains.

Crews from WAPA and the contractor began work on Sunday and are continuing their efforts to address the transformer issue affecting St. Mary’s School. WAPA apologizes for the inconvenience to our businesses and residents and appreciates the public’s understanding as work progresses to safely complete the repairs.

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.