



THE VIRGIN ISLANDS WATER & POWER AUTHORITY CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS NEWS RELEASE

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The Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority Celebrates 60 Years with Hurricane Preparedness Campaign, Engages Youth in Summer Camps



Image: Aariyah Athanase, WAPA Communications representative, at Handy Spandy Preschool Summer Camp on St. Thomas assisting children with Pillowcase Emergency Kit drawing exercise.

U.S. Virgin Islands, July 11, 2024 – In celebration of its 60th anniversary, the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority (“WAPA” or the “Authority”) has launched a comprehensive hurricane preparedness campaign aimed at engaging the youth in the community, including a digital informational series. This week, WAPA visited three local camps: Grove Summer Camp and Alternative School Summer Camp in St. Croix, and Handy Spandy Summer Camp in St. Thomas, on July 9th and 10th, 2024.

The events focused on the importance of proper preparation for the hurricane season. Representatives from WAPA's Safety Department, IT, and Communications teams educated the students on the essential items needed for emergency situations. Activities included the innovative Pillowcase Emergency Kit drawing exercise, conducted in collaboration with the [Red Cross](#). This exercise encouraged students to draw items they would need in their emergency kits, using a pillowcase as a carrier. This approach challenged them to think critically about the limited essential items they would be able to carry in an emergency. The Red Cross also provided a comprehensive activity book that will allow the students to continue learning about hurricane preparedness at home with their families.

Students participated in various interactive activities where WAPA employees walked them through different scenarios that could occur during or after a hurricane. These scenarios helped children from 5 years to 12 years old understand how to make crucial decisions in the event of being separated from their parents or during an evacuation. The goal was to ensure the youth felt comfortable and confident in their preparedness.

“Empowering our youth with the knowledge and tools to prepare for hurricanes is a crucial step in ensuring the safety of our community,” said Shanell Petersen, Director of Corporate Communications at the Authority. “These activities not only educate but also engage the students in a manner that makes learning about emergency preparedness both fun and memorable as part of WAPA’s holistic outreach approach with the community.”

WAPA acknowledges the importance of equipping young individuals with the skills and knowledge to lead their families in hurricane preparedness. By instilling these values early, WAPA aims to foster a community that is well-prepared and resilient in the face of natural disasters that may cause unexpected electric and water outages.

As WAPA celebrates 60 years of service, this initiative reflects its ongoing commitment to community outreach and engagement, and safety. The organization remains dedicated to empowering the residents of the U.S. Virgin Islands through education and proactive measures, ensuring a safer and more resilient future for all.

To watch full recap video of the Outreach at the summer camps, please visit [WAPA’s YouTube page](https://youtu.be/xL1E_u3r5Fk) at https://youtu.be/xL1E_u3r5Fk.

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.