



THE VIRGIN ISLANDS WATER & POWER AUTHORITY CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS NEWS RELEASE

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August 14, 2023



Cordell Jacobs, Interim Director of Transmission and Distribution of the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority

The Authority Participates at CARILEC Engineering and Procurement Conference in Trinidad

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS – The Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority’s (“WAPA” or “Authority”) Interim Director of Transmission and Distribution Cordell Jacobs and Director of Project Management Chavante Marsh recently attended CARILEC’s Engineering and Procurement Conference, held in Trinidad on July 23-27, 2023. The conference served as an inclusive platform for industry leaders to exchange ideas and insights on enhancing the electrical infrastructure within the Caribbean region.

As part of the 5-day event, Interim Director Jacobs presented on the Authority’s path from concept to execution for effective overhead storm hardening using composite utility poles in the US Virgin Islands (USVI). Over the years, the USVI has faced its share of tropical storms and hurricanes, which have caused significant disruptions to the power grid and impacted the lives of many residents. In response to these challenges, WAPA embarked on an ambitious initiative to enhance the resiliency of its overhead transmission and distribution system.

The Composite Pole project is 90% funded through the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) Hazard Mitigation Program, with a 10% match being provided by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Director Jacob’s presentation highlighted the Authority’s steadfast commitment to building a robust electrical infrastructure and outlined the various considerations that went into the transition. "Currently we are at nearly 90% completion, with 7399 poles installed territory-wide," stated Interim Director Cordell Jacobs.

"By adopting composite utility poles, we have taken a significant step towards fortifying the power grid in the US Virgin Islands and we are proud to be an example for other utilities in the region and to share our experiences with fellow industry leaders."

The Authority would like to thank CARILEC for the invitation to speak during the week's events and looks forward to future opportunities to collaborate, as the Authority continues to prioritize building a more sustainable and resilient energy future in the US Virgin Islands.

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.

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