



THE VIRGIN ISLANDS WATER & POWER AUTHORITY CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS NEWS RELEASE

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2WAPA employees from Line, Plant Operations and Maintenance, Substation and Engineering, participate in Fall Protection and Prevention Training led by Sage Services Group LLC on Tuesday, December 13, 2022, in the Sunny Isles Business Office Conference room in St. Croix.

WAPA Employees Complete Safety Training on Fall Protection and Prevention

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS – The Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority (“WAPA” or “Authority”) announces on December 12-15, 2022, 184 employees completed a “Worker Fall Protection and Prevention” training event on St. Croix and St. Thomas. The training, provided by the American Public Power Association (APPA) and funded through a grant from the federal government’s Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), benefitted employees across multiple departments including Line, Plant Operations and Maintenance, Substation and Engineering.

As the Authority continues to prioritize safety on the job for its employees, proactively seeking out available training programs is a key part of safety adherence. “This week’s training was well received and provided our skilled workforce with valuable information. As we strive to offer quality training to our employees, grant-funded programs like this one allow us to do so without incurring additional financial strain,” notes Josh Jones, Director of Safety at the Authority. “Safety is one of the most critical components of a utility’s operation and subsequent success. We will continue to identify innovative ways to keep Authority employees and our community safe,” added Director Jones.

Rey E. Belardo Jr., Line Supervisor at the Authority noted, “Having been a lineman for over 17 years, refresher courses are extremely beneficial and offer great reminders of best practices—particularly around safety, since falls are often the primary cause of injuries. This week’s courses were great not only for apprentices, but also for us senior guys. I think it’s human nature to get comfortable in our positions, so courses like this one help us to remember to STAY SAFE and vigilante. I am happy the Authority prioritized this training for us, and it shows me that WAPA is heading in the right direction.”

Sage Services Group LLC conducted the fall protection and prevention training, led by Sonya Hopson, Chief Executive Officer. Topics covered included fall hazards and fall protection measures with an emphasis on the utility industry, in addition to causes of injury and death while on the job in the industry. Employees also learned about the importance of pre-planning and pre-job briefings as part of prevention.

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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