



THE VIRGIN ISLANDS WATER & POWER AUTHORITY
CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS
NEWS RELEASE

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December 9, 2022

WAPA Lineworkers Receive New Bucket Truck Training & Install Lights for Miracle on Main Street

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS – The Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority (“WAPA” or “Authority”) recently received three new Versalift bucket trucks, one of which was completely funded through the Department of Interior. The new trucks are part of the Authority’s efforts to improve operational efficiency, timely service to customers, and improve working conditions for its lineworkers.

As part of the latest acquisition, earlier this week lineworkers received comprehensive training on the new bucket trucks from Alan Berry, a representative from Smyrna Truck and Cargo based in Milledgeville, Georgia. “It’s quite a rewarding experience to be able to travel across the US to different utilities and help equip and train employees to leverage new technologies like the Versalift bucket trucks to perform their jobs more efficiently and safely”, noted Mr. Berry.

Akeem Thomas, Electrician 1st Class at the Authority noted, “The team and I have been anticipating the arrival of the new bucket trucks and are looking forward to adding more reliability to the fleet. The smallest bucket truck introduces a significant improvement to the bucket boom which can now rotate 180 degrees, making it very convenient for linemen working on poles. The compact size also makes it easier to maneuver steep hills, with winding roads and sharp turns. Additional vehicle benefits include integrated new technology that will save on fuel and limit wear and tear on the engine.”

“Due to ongoing issues with the fleet, our lineworkers oftentimes share only one bucket truck across the island as they work tirelessly to ensure our customers are served in a timely manner. The addition of the new bucket trucks will not only help improve service to our customers, but it will allow our employees to more safely and confidently complete their jobs. The introduction of hybrid technology thanks to the Department of Interior grant, will improve operational efficiency, reduce jobsite noise and improve safety through the utilization of an onboard battery system that operates the aerial lift device on the truck” notes Ashley Bryan, Director of Transmission and Distribution at the Authority.

Of special note, the Authority’s lineworkers were pleased to be able to use one of the new Versalift bucket trucks on the following day, Tuesday, December 6th to hang the lights for the upcoming annual holiday event, Miracle on Main Street being held on Friday, December 16th hosted by the St. Thomas – St. John Chamber of Commerce.



Figure 1: WAPA lineworkers use new Versalift bucket trucks to install lights for Miracle on Main Street on Tuesday, December 6, 2022. The hybrid bucket truck was funded by the Department of Interior which boasts high efficiency amongst other benefits.



Figure 2: WAPA lineworkers receive training on Versalift bucket trucks on Monday, December 5, 2022 from Alan Berry, a representative from Smyrna Truck and Cargo based in Milledgeville, Georgia.

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.