



THE VIRGIN ISLANDS WATER & POWER AUTHORITY
CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS
NEWS RELEASE

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**WAPA Makes Significant Progress in the Aftermath of Tropical Storm Ernesto:
80% of Customers Restored Across the Territory**



Image: WAPA Crews working on clearing debris and repairing poles in the field.

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS (August 16, 2024) – As part of the ongoing recovery from Tropical Storm Ernesto, the Virgin Islands Water & Power Authority (“WAPA” or the “Authority”) continues to work tirelessly to restore power and water services to our valued customers. The Authority remains dedicated to ensuring that all areas in the territory regain essential utilities as quickly and safely as possible.

Yesterday, local utility contractor, Haugland VI, joined the efforts territory-wide alongside the Virgin Islands Department of Public Works in clearing debris for our line crews to safely conduct the necessary repairs on poles and powerlines.

At the end of day two of restoration efforts, we restored power to 21,047 on St. Croix, 15,789 customers on St. Thomas, and 2,297 customers on St. John. Territory-wide 80 percent of our electric customers have received power in their homes and businesses. With nearly full power restoration, water pumping capacity is now fully operational at 100%. However, additional repairs are anticipated for several pump stations that sustained damage during the aftermath of Tropical Storm Ernesto.

Line crews continue efforts on St. Croix with five (5) WAPA line crews, supplemented by two (2) Haugland VI Crews on pocket outages. On St. Thomas, three (3) WAPA line crews are being supplemented by four (4) Haugland VI Crews with prioritized restoration efforts for Feeder 5A, 6B, and several pocket outages across the island. As of last night, St. John is 93% restored with one (1) crew diligently working to restore

the remaining customers experiencing pocket outages. The composite poles have significantly enhanced the resilience of St. John's grid, and the team's restoration efforts are noteworthy.

In Downtown Charlotte Amalie, primarily Main Street and Backstreet, a downed pole has prevented restoration of power that is scheduled to be repaired this morning by our contractor, Haugland VI. As several customers have experienced, fluctuations and sporadic outages may occur to conduct more permanent repairs further stabilizing the grid following the initial repairs in urgency of restoring power to our customers.

Our call center will remain open today from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Yesterday, 16 of our dedicated WAPA volunteers were able to answer the call for 589 customers across the Territory. For continued support, please report isolated outages to WAPA's hotline number at 340-715-8007.

The Authority greatly appreciates the patience and understanding of our customers during this challenging time and to our hardworking men and women across WAPA.

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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