



THE VIRGIN ISLANDS WATER & POWER AUTHORITY  
CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS  
**NEWS RELEASE**

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### WAPA Powers Up Earth Day with a Solar Learning Experience



*Image: T'Niqua Thibou, VIenergize Program Administrator of the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority, demonstrates how solar energy powers a microwave to pop popcorn for students at Earth Day celebration on St. John.*

St. John, U.S. Virgin Islands (April 23, 2026) — The Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority (“WAPA” or “the Authority”) was pleased to participate in the Earth Day celebration held on April 22 on St. John, hosted by The Friends of the Virgin Islands National Park. The event brought together more than 400 students for a day of environmental education and discovery.

As part of its outreach efforts, WAPA connected with students to highlight the power and potential of solar energy. Through engaging discussions and a live demonstration, students observed how sunlight can be harnessed to generate clean, renewable electricity, an increasingly important part of the territory’s energy future.

A highlight of WAPA's exhibit was a demonstration showing how solar energy can power everyday appliances. Students observed energy generated from the solar panels was stored in a battery and used to operate a microwave, popping fresh popcorn on-site. The activity provided a clear and memorable example of how renewable energy works in real-world applications.

WAPA also shared information about its ongoing investments in solar infrastructure through public-private partnerships for the four existing solar farms located at Petronella, Hogensborg, and Spanish Town on St. Croix, and Donoe on St. Thomas. These facilities are a key part of the Authority's strategy to diversify the territory's energy mix, reduce reliance on fossil fuels, and build a more resilient and sustainable grid. WAPA is also looking forward to the additional solar farm expected to come online this year in Fortuna on St. Thomas and continues to advance longer-term resilience projects, including a planned microgrid development on St. John.

"Earth Day is an important opportunity to connect with the next generation and spark curiosity about renewable energy and its role in our future," said Brian Walden, Director of VI Energize of the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority. "By giving students the opportunity to see renewable energy in action, we aim to inspire the next generation to play a role in shaping a more sustainable Virgin Islands."

WAPA continues to advance renewable energy solutions while building community awareness in support of a cleaner energy future for the territory.

*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.