



THE VIRGIN ISLANDS WATER & POWER AUTHORITY CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS NEWS RELEASE

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WAPA Announces Start of Queen Mary Highway Underground Electrical Upgrade



Fig. 1: Map of Phase I of Queen Mary Highway Feeder 9B Underground Electrical Duct Bank Project on St. Croix, including the Route 70 and Route 663 intersections.

ST. CROIX, U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS (March 17, 2025) – The Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority (“WAPA” or the “Authority”) is informing the public of the upcoming Phase I of the Queen Mary Highway Underground Electrical Duct Bank Project, set to begin on Monday, March 24, 2025. This project, funded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), aims to strengthen the resilience of Feeder 9B while enhancing the reliability and efficiency of the electrical system by transitioning Queen Mary Highway’s power distribution from overhead to underground.

J. Benton Construction, the awarded contractor, carrying out the project on behalf of WAPA will start with material staging and site preparation on March 24, 2025. Physical construction will begin with Phase 1 of 3 on April 7, 2025, with substantial completion expected by the first quarter of 2026. Once work begins, the eastbound lane on Route 70 will remain closed throughout each phase of the project.

The following facilities and areas will be affected:

- St. Croix Central High School
- Kingshill Lutheran Church
- St. Croix Curriculum Center

- Superior Court of the Virgin Islands
- Herbert Grigg Home for the Aged
- Department of Human Services Head Start
- University of the Virgin Islands, Albert A. Sheen Campus
- St. Croix Educational Complex High School
- St. Croix Vocational School
- Virgin Islands Research and Technology Park (RTPark)
- Virgin Islands Housing Authority Aureo Diaz Heights
- Estate Castle Burke Site I and Site II
- St. Croix Agricultural Fairgrounds

There will be occasional disruptions in electrical and water services during certain phases of the project. The Authority will minimize any inconvenience and notify affected areas/customers via [WAPA alerts](#).

Traffic control plans will be in place, and detours signs will direct motorists safely to alternate routes. Drivers should anticipate possible delays, follow posted signage, and comply with instructions from flaggers and traffic management personnel. Additional public notices will be issued as the project progresses on Queen Mary Highway.

Updates will be shared on WAPA's [website](#) and through local media outlets.

WAPA apologizes for any inconvenience this may cause and appreciates the community's cooperation and support as we work to strengthen the territory's electrical distribution and transmission system.

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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