



THE VIRGIN ISLANDS WATER & POWER AUTHORITY
CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS
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WAPA Outlines Long-Term Plan to Strengthen Water System Serving Western St. Croix

Authority acknowledges ongoing service challenges while advancing major infrastructure investment

St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands (July 13, 2026) — The Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority (“WAPA” or “the Authority”) is acknowledging the ongoing water service challenges affecting some customers in Frederiksted and western St. Croix while providing an update on a major infrastructure investment designed to improve long-term reliability.

During the current dry spell, many customers have experienced low water pressure, intermittent service, or prolonged water outages as demand on the potable water system has increased.

"Some customers have gone far longer than anyone should without reliable water service, and we understand the hardship and frustration this has caused," said Don Gregoire, Interim Chief Operating Officer of Water Distribution at the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority. "Water is essential to everyday life, and we recognize the impact extends far beyond inconvenience."

While similar conditions have occurred during previous dry seasons, WAPA recognizes that recurring challenges are not acceptable.

The Authority's water distribution system was built decades ago to serve a much different level of demand. During extended dry periods, as private cisterns become depleted, significantly more customers rely on WAPA's potable water system at the same time. The existing infrastructure was not designed to consistently accommodate that level of demand.

WAPA crews continue working daily to maximize available water supply, make operational adjustments, and restore service wherever possible. While these efforts help improve service, they cannot fully overcome the limitations of aging infrastructure.

To address these longstanding challenges, WAPA is advancing its Prudent Replacement Program—a comprehensive investment to modernize the water distribution system and improve reliability for future generations.

The project includes:

- Replacing aging and undersized water lines.
- Upgrading pump stations.
- Increasing overall system capacity.
- Improving service reliability, particularly during periods of peak demand and drought conditions.

The project reached a significant milestone earlier this year when it was advertised for bids by the Virgin Islands Office of Disaster Recovery and the Super Project Management Office (Super PMO). Bids have been received and are currently under evaluation.

The project is expected to be presented to the Public Finance Authority Board for consideration during its August 2026 meeting, with contract execution anticipated in November 2026.

Following contract award, the project will enter the design phase, which is expected to run from late 2026 through 2028. Construction is currently projected to begin in 2029 and continue in phases through 2035.

While the overall timeline reflects the complexity and scale of replacing critical water infrastructure across a large service area, WAPA remains committed to keeping customers informed as the project progresses and key milestones are achieved.

"Our goal is not simply to respond when the system is under stress," said Gregoire. "It is to build a stronger, more resilient water system that can better serve our customers today and for decades to come. We remain committed to earning our customers' trust through transparency, action, and meaningful improvements."

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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.