



THE VIRGIN ISLANDS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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November 18, 2019

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL CLOSED NOVEMBER 19 DUE TO REOCCURRENCE OF GASEOUS ODOR IMPACTING CAMPUS

ST. CROIX, USVI – Virgin Islands Department of Education (VIDE) officials in the St. Croix District have announced the closure of the St. Croix Central High School on November 19 due to a reoccurrence of gaseous odors impacting the campus.

In response to the ongoing issue, an Incident Command System (ICS) has been stood up as professionals continue to work diligently to identify the source of the odor. Responding agencies and departments include the VIDE, Virgin Islands Fire Services (VIFS), Department of Planning & Natural Resources (DPNR), Virgin Islands Territorial Emergency Management Agency (VITEMA), Virgin Islands Waste Management Authority (VIWMA), Virgin Islands Department of Health's Division of Environmental Health, Virgin Islands Department of Public Works (DPW), and the Virgin Islands National Guard (VING).

“The health and safety of our students and staff are of the highest priority, so we will continue to work closely with our partner agencies and do whatever is necessary to rectify this issue,” said St. Croix Insular Superintendent Carlos McGregor.

Joint efforts to identify and mitigate the source of the scent included canvassing the immediate and surrounding communities and industrial sectors, and cleaning and deodorizing sewer lines on and near the Central High School campus. The work began last week and continued throughout the weekend. To increase the response initiatives and increase aerial monitoring operations, the Virgin Islands Fire Service has enlisted the support of the VING's 23rd Weapons of Mass Destruction

Civil Support Team (WMD-CST). DPNR has also contacted the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for additional support to the island.

Staff at the Governor Juan F. Luis Hospital (JFLH) and the Virgin Islands Department of Health's Emergency Medical Services (EMS) are prepared to support, respond, and provide immediate assistance to residents impacted by this issue. Residents with health issues relating to this incident are advised to report to JFLH immediately.

The Department will continue to provide updates on any impacts to public health and the environment, and thanks the community for its continued patience and cooperation.

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