



# GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS OF THE UNITED STATES

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## DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### DPNR AIR QUALITY UPDATE

Commissioner Jean-Pierre L. Oriol of the Department of Planning and Natural Resources is pleased to report that at this present time the Territory is not being impacted from the volcanic ash from La Soufriere.

The gray haze observed in the territory for the past few days, was a combined result of the volcanic eruption on St. Vincent and the movement of African Sahara Desert dust.

The National Weather Service reported this morning: "LIGHT AND VARIABLE WINDS NEAR THE SURFACE, AND WESTERLY MID- TO UPPER-LEVEL WINDS CONTINUE, KEEPING ASH AT THE LOWER LEVELS TO THE VICINITY OF ST. VINCENT, AND CARRYING IT OVER THE ATLANTIC AT HIGHER ALTITUDES. THIS WIND PATTERN WILL PREVAIL THROUGH FRIDAY, KEEPING THE ASH PLUME AWAY FROM PUERTO RICO AND THE U.S VIRGIN ISLANDS.

DPNR advises the public that it is now safe to reconnect all downspouts leading to the cistern. However, the National Weather Service continued, "IF THERE ARE MORE ERUPTIONS DURING THE NEXT SEVERAL DAYS, AND THE LOW-TO-MID LEVEL WINDS INCREASE SIGNIFICANTLY, THEN THERE IS THE POSSIBILITY FOR SOME OF THE SUSPENDED ASH TO MOVE CLOSER TO OUR REGION. WE WILL BE CLOSELY MONITORING THE EVENT DURING THE NEXT SEVERAL DAYS..."

Commissioner Oriol also advises the community that the Territory may experience low air quality next week from Sahara Dust. See below for National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) satellite image taken today of Sahara Dust moving west off the coast of Africa.

