



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 ISSUES DAMAGED VESSEL REMOVAL NOTICE**

Commissioner Jean-Pierre L. Oriol of the Department of Planning and Natural Resources (DPNR) reminds the community that recovery operations following Tropical Storm Ernesto in the Virgin Islands are ongoing. This includes the continued salvage and removal of damaged vessels from the harbors, waterways, and boardwalks.

Despite their best efforts, DPNR, the Virgin Islands Emergency Management Agency (VITEMA), and the United States Coast Guard (USCG) have been unable to reach several registered boat owners whose vessels were significantly damaged during the storm. These vessels now pose a hazardous risk or obstacle to the community and must be removed.

In accordance with Title 23 § 1015 DEBRIS AND WRECKAGE REMOVAL IN EMERGENCIES AND MAJOR DISASTERS, **the Virgin Islands Government will remove all unclaimed vessels unless the owners come forward. Any vessels deemed beyond restoration will be destroyed and disposed of at the local dump.**

For more information, please contact Environmental Enforcement Director Howard Forbes at (340) 773-5774 or email [howard.forbes@dpnr.vi.gov](mailto:howard.forbes@dpnr.vi.gov).