GOVERNMENT HOUSE
UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS

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Governor Bryan Praises Class of 2021 Graduates And Investigation Into Cause of Odor Affecting St. Croix Residents

Percentage of Vaccinated Virgin Islanders Crosses 50 Percent Threshold

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS — During the Government House weekly press briefing on Monday, Governor Albert Bryan Jr. praised the Class of 2021 and praised the principals, administrators and the high school, UVI and Adult Education graduation committees for providing a memorable and safe experience for students even as the Territory continues to fight the spread of COVID-19.

“Quite frankly, from what I have heard from several parents and some students, they appreciated not having to sit through a four-hours graduation ceremony with countless lectures from politicians,” Governor Bryan said. “What we had instead was truly a celebration that focused on the most important thing: the graduates and their achievement. If nothing else, this year’s graduations were short, upbeat, memorable, and, most importantly, safe.”

The Governor also thanked the Environmental Protection Agency for working with the Department of Planning and Natural Resources and other Government of the Virgin Islands agencies for pinpointing an open manhole cover at the Anguilla Landfill as the source of the odors plaguing St. Croix.

"We were having a difficult time matching up some of the readings of the gaseous odors detected in the community with events occurring within the refinery," Governor Bryan said. "As it turns out, there was an additional source that was unaccounted for at the time. This is why we were very cautious in not jumping to early conclusions in this or any matter."
The Governor said the investigation into the odor will continue to find complete proof of the cause of the odors.

Stimulus payments
On Thursday, the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) and Department of Finance issued a fourth batch of 10,000 stimulus checks totaling $23,420,288.

BIR's office in Red Hook has been closed due to a COVID-19 related matter and is scheduled to reopen Wednesday. Residents with questions about their stimulus payments or income tax refund checks can contact the bureau at 340-714-9325.

Vaccinations administered
- 39,871 first doses (50.2% of the population)
- 31,645 persons fully vaccinated (39.9% of the population)

Anyone who thinks they may have contracted COVID-19 can call the Epidemiology hotline at 340-712-6299 or 340-776-1519. For more information, visit covid19usvi.com.

For information about the COVID-19 vaccines, call the VITEMA hotline Mondays-Fridays from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. at 340-777-VACS (8227).

Pop-Up testing sites
This week, pop-up testing sites will be at the following locations:
- **Home Depot** on St. Thomas on Tuesday, May 25, from 1 to 3 p.m.
- **Canegata Rec Center** on St. Croix on Tuesday, May 25, from 10 a.m. to noon.
- **The V.I. Port Authority Gravel Yard** on St. John on Wednesday, May 26, from 1 to 4 p.m.
- **Home Depot** on St. Croix on Thursday, May 27, time from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
- **Lionel Roberts Stadium** on St. Thomas on Thursday, May 27, from 1 to 3 p.m.

Residents can pre-register for testing online at www.covid19usvi.com/testing.

COVID-19 cases as of May 22
- 3.23% positivity rate
- Currently tracking 77 active cases (8 STX; 64 STT; 5 STJ).
- 111,921 individuals tested to date.
- 108,568 of those tests were negative.
- 3,353 tests came back positive.
- 3,249 people have recovered.
- 27 fatalities.
- No COVID-19 patients are hospitalized at Juan F. Luis Medical Center on St. Croix.
- Four COVID-19 patients, none on ventilators, currently are hospitalized at Schneider Regional Medical Center on St. Thomas.

The Bryan-Roach Administration is committed to transparency, stabilizing the economy, restoring trust in the government and ensuring the disaster recovery is completed as quickly as possible.

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