

# ST. THOMAS SOURCE

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by Date

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## Local government — St. Thomas

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### VITEMA Holds Public Workshops on Hazard Mitigation Plan

BY SOURCE STAFF — MAY 9, 2014

May 13 through 15, the Virgin Islands Territorial Emergency Management Agency (VITEMA) will hold a second round of public workshops to gather public input on updates to the territory's Hazard Mitigation Plan.

The public is invited to public workshops being held on:

- Tuesday, May 13 — 5:30 p.m., at the Emerald Beach Hotel, Lindbergh Bay, St. Thomas.
- Wednesday, May 14 — 5:30 p.m., at the Julius Sprauve School Auditorium, Cruz Bay, St. John.
- Thursday, May 15 — 5:30 p.m., at Gertrude's Restaurant, Castle Coakley, St. Croix.

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GOVERNMENT CALENDAR

ARTS/ENTERTAINMENT CALENDAR

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

#### SOURCE PICKS

##### Undercurrents: Stricter Water Standards Still Set for September

From more than 100 sites, territory residents regularly dump their waste into the surrounding ocean, threatening fragile coral beds and potentially putting at risk the fish populations that feed and shelter there.

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## Community Calendar

*St. John Tradewinds* welcomes notices of community-oriented, not-for-profit events for inclusion in this weekly listing. Call 776-6496, e-mail [editor@tradewinds.vi](mailto:editor@tradewinds.vi) or fax 693-8885.

### Wednesday, May 14

— The Virgin Islands Police Department will celebrate National Police Week with an open house at Leander Jurgen Command on Monday, May 12, from 12 to 3 p.m. in Cruz Bay.

### \* Wednesday, May 14 \*

— The Virgin Islands Territorial Emergency Management Agency (VITEMA) will have a second round of public workshops to gather public input on updates to the territory's Hazard Mitigation Plan. The St. John workshop is scheduled for Wednesday, May 14, at 5:30 p.m., at the Julius Sprauve School Cafeteria in Cruz Bay.

— The Virgin Islands Police Department will celebrate National Police Week with a fun day at Julius E. Sprauve School on Wednesday, May 14, from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

### Thursday, May 15

— The Office of the Governor in partnership with the Departments of Education and Public Works announces a public scoping meeting to solicit recommendations for a new St. John School under consideration for the island of St. John. The meeting will be at the Julius E. Sprauve School cafeteria on Thursday, May 15, from 6 to

8 p.m. Preliminary educational program requirements and key milestones in the process to date will be outlined.

### Saturday, May 17

— The Animal Care Center of St. John has rescheduled Wagapalooza, due to inclement weather, for Saturday, May 17, from 5 to 8 p.m. at the Winston Wells Ball Field in Cruz Bay.

— The University of the Virgin Islands will host its 2014 Commencement Ceremonies at 7 p.m. on Saturday, May 17, in the Sports and Fitness Center on the St. Thomas Campus.

### Sunday, May 24

— The 11th annual Beach-to-Beach Power Swim will be on Saturday, May 24. The event is set in the protected waters of Virgin Islands National Park along the north shore of St. John.

### Monday, June 30

— Lt. Gov. Gregory Francis is strongly encouraging and reminding corporate citizens to meet the June 30 deadline for franchise taxes and annual filing requirements. Failure to comply with the annual filing requirements will result in the assessment of penalties and interest, withdrawal of good standing status, or even administrative dissolution.

# VITEMA Hosting Hazard Mitigation Plan Workshop on May 14

## St. John Tradewinds

The Virgin Islands Territorial Emergency Management Agency (VITEMA) will have a second round of public workshops to gather public input on updates to the territory's Hazard Mitigation Plan.

The St. John workshop is scheduled for Wednesday, May 14, at 5:30 p.m., at the Julius Sprauve School Cafeteria in Cruz Bay.

The purpose of the USVI Hazard Mitigation Plan is to identify activities that can be undertaken by both the public and the private sectors to reduce property damage caused by hazards in-

cluding floods, earthquakes, and hurricanes. While these hazards are acts of nature, the impacts on residents, public facilities, businesses, and private property can be diminished through hazard mitigation planning.

VITEMA is directing this territory-wide planning effort which is being funded by a grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The planning activities have been coordinated through a Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee created by VITEMA.

"A participatory planning process is vital for the development of a comprehensive mitigation

plan as it is only through public participation that the priorities of the community are reflected," said Haldor Farquhar, VITEMA State Hazard Mitigation Officer. "In this regard, the public workshops are an important forum for understanding community concerns and incorporating feedback from government agencies, businesses and citizenry into the plan."

The Hazard Mitigation Plan will document information on the frequency of occurrence of natural hazard events, utilizing past disaster damages to understand the impact or vulnerability to natural hazards. A series of estimates will be used to understand the extent

of hazards and potential property damages that may result from specific hazards. The resulting information will outline the full range of hazards the territory faces, from hurricanes to landslide—and potential social impacts, damages and economic losses.

"The territory's Hazard Mitigation Plan is an important tool for VITEMA and the government because it provides a comprehensive review of the natural hazards and their potential impacts to citizens and property," said Elton Lewis, VITEMA Director. "By understanding the risks, we can outline and prioritize mitigation strategies that will help protect

our communities."

Lewis added that community participation and feedback in the planning process is critical to the success of the plan because the local government, the private sector and non-profit stakeholders will ultimately be responsible for implementing the actions outlined in the mitigation plan. More importantly, the Virgin Islands will benefit from the federal grants for mitigation of hazards identified in the plan, he said.

For more information, contact Haldor Farquhar, VITEMA State Hazard Mitigation Officer, at 340-774-2244 or via email at haldor.farquhar@vitema.vi.gov.