United States Environmental Protection Agency

COMMUNITY UPDATE – ST. CROIX REFINERY

EPA Conditionally Approves Plans to Remove Dangerous Chemicals from Refinery on St. Croix

EPA to Update the Public on Planned Work at the Refinery on St. Croix

U.S. VI Government Representatives to Join EPA at Virtual Public Meeting on February 15 6 PM (Atlantic Standard Time)

On February 9, 2023, EPA conditionally approved plans to safely remove dangerous chemicals from systems at the refinery on St. Croix. EPA will oversee the work, which will begin with preparation work starting this month. Repairs to the ammonia system are scheduled to begin in early March, and chemical removal is scheduled to begin in early April and expected to be complete this summer.

Chemicals Removal Plans

Ammonia: The plan requires Port Hamilton Refining and Transportation LLLP (PHRT), and contractors to make repairs to the system to ensure safe removal of the ammonia. PHRT contractors will remove the anhydrous ammonia by transferring the ammonia to specially designed shipping containers. Contractors will then purge and treat any remaining ammonia vapors from the system under closed conditions to prevent vapors from escaping. The containers with the ammonia will be shipped off-island for sale or disposal.

Liquified Petroleum Gas (LPG): After the ammonia removal work is complete, LPG will be transferred into shipping containers and contractors will depressurize any remaining hydrocarbon vapors in the containers, process equipment and piping, and transfer the vapors to a thermal oxidizer for destruction. Nitrogen will be used to remove any residual hydrocarbon vapors from the system, which will also be routed to the thermal oxidizer. EPA has approved the plan to remove the LPG, on the condition that PHRT and its contractors apply for and comply with necessary air permits from the Virgin Islands Department of Planning and Natural Resources (DPNR) associated with the removal of the LPG. The containers with the LPG will be shipped off-island for sale or proper disposal.

Amines: Amine liquid containing hydrogen sulfide will be transferred into appropriate shipping containers that will be shipped off-island. EPA has approved the plan to remove the amine liquid, on the condition that PHRT and its contractors accept EPA's removal plan recommendations and apply for and comply with necessary air permits from DPNR.

Oversight, Monitoring & Coordination

EPA will have personnel on-site at the refinery to oversee work being done in connection with the removal of these chemicals.

EPA will conduct around-the-clock air monitoring to ensure people's safety. EPA will display the real-time air monitoring results on a website that will be linked from EPA's refinery on St Croix Website.

EPA will continue to coordinate closely with the government of the U.S. Virgin Islands emergency management and environmental agencies. The Virgin Islands Territorial Emergency Management Agency (VITEMA) is the coordinating agency of the U.S. Virgin Islands for emergency readiness and response.

To Join the February 15 Community Meeting: Email StCroix@epa.gov or call (866) 462-4789

EPA Community Contacts: Zeno Bain and Philip Parker at StCroix@epa.gov or (866) 462-4789

EPA Toll-free Hotline: (866) 462-4789

EPA Email: StCroix@epa.gov

EPA St. Croix Refinery Website: www.epa.gov/vi/refinery-st-croix-us-virgin-islands

VITEMA Website: www.vitema.vi.gov