



To: The News Editors

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NWC ADDRESSING WATER ISSUES AHEAD OF NEW SCHOOL YEAR

In preparation for the new school year beginning next week, the National Water Commission has put in place a number of special measures aimed at addressing any known water-related challenge to the smooth re-opening of schools island wide.

A meeting was therefore held last week between the National Water Commission and the Ministry of Education and Youth to confirm a series of arrangements. These include:

- school authorities being asked to ensure that appropriate water storage capacity is in place;
- the exchange of contact details for critical personnel at the local, regional and national levels;
- the identification of schools and areas that are likely to encounter challenges in receiving piped water supply due to ongoing drought conditions or other issues;
- the provision of technical advice for any corrective measure that may be needed; and
- the prioritization of schools and educational institutions for water trucking, where necessary.

The National Water Commission as part of its communications strategy has also been conducting a series of meetings with political representatives and other community stakeholders to address concerns and challenges and share its plans for improvement. (For example, meetings were held

with a Westmoreland Member of Parliament in August and with Councilors from both Western and Eastern St. Thomas in March and June, respectively.

Issues raised in these meetings are then taken under consideration by the Commission in the development of its short term, medium term and long term plans and updates provided on the progress.

In the case of St. Thomas, NWC has been in discussions with the local leaders regarding its plans for: -

- 1) Whitehall Treatment Plant upgrading for which engineering designs are now being done;
- 2) Preparatory work for the development of new production wells at Springfield and South Haven;
- 3) Non-Revenue Water (NRW) reduction activities to improve operating efficiency and service reliability in the parish; and
- 4) Other general operational efficiency improvement activities.

Based on the communication avenues being maintained and the other measures being put in place by the NWC, NWC Vice Presidents for Divisional Operations, Michael Dunn and Kevin Kerr, do not expect that there will be any major water-related issues at the start of the school year despite about 20% of its water supply systems mainly in eastern parishes being impacted by drought conditions.

NWC asks for the continued cooperation and understanding of our valued customers as we work to provide the best level of service possible under the prevailing conditions.

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