



Full Story

[CLOSE WINDOW]

## UVI workshop covers future of energy

BY JOY BLACKBURN (DAILY NEWS STAFF)

Published: November 17, 2010

Font size: [\[A\]](#) [\[A\]](#) [\[A\]](#)



E-MAIL THIS



SHARE THIS

ST. CROIX - About 80 people came together to talk about the future of energy in the territory on Monday and Tuesday, at the Energy Development in Island Nations USVI Energy Workshop at the University of the Virgin Islands.

"The Energy Revolution: We are the Solution" was the theme of the conference.

Those attending included members of the USVI Energy Action Team, the Energy Development in Island Nations USVI project working groups, and local clean energy advocates, according to a release about the conference from the V.I. Energy Office.

"It's going great," Bevan Smith Jr., director of the V.I. Energy Office and co-director of the Energy Development in Island Nations USVI Alliance, said Tuesday afternoon. Smith said the workshop was organized with an eye toward helping the territory with the issue of actually deploying renewable energy, to meet Gov. John deJongh Jr.'s goal of reducing the Virgin Islands' dependency on fossil fuel by 60 percent by 2025.

"There are lots of challenges" associated with switching to renewable energy, Smith said.

Topics covered during the two-day workshop ranged from solar and wind power to integrating renewable energy.

"This is the way we bring the community - all the stakeholders, the policy-makers, those who carry out the policy, and those influenced by the policy - together," said Hugo Hodge Jr., executive director of the V.I. Water and Power Authority and the co-director of the Energy Development in Island Nations USVI Alliance. "We're getting a feel for how we guide the territory to some kind of energy independence."

The workshop, the third in a series of energy workshops organized by Energy Development in Island Nations this year, was the first one on St. Croix.

Adam Warren, from the National Renewable Energy Laboratory in Colorado and Energy Development in Island Nations team leader, said in the release that the 15-month-old project had been working with WAPA and the local government to help the territory reduce its dependency on fuel.

"The Virgin Islands has taken hold of our energy development and we are looking forward to being leaders in the Caribbean," Smith said.

According to the release, Smith told those attending that progress already had been made cutting fossil fuel consumption because of Energy Office programs, and Hodge said that WAPA "definitely supports integrating renewables into WAPA's generation mix" and is actively moving to do so at many levels.

A new campaign, called VI-Energize also was unveiled at the conference. The public education campaign will focus on energy efficiency and alternative energy.

The workshop featured local presenters, as well as representatives from Harvard, the University of California at Berkeley and the National Renewable Energy Lab in Colorado.

- Contact Joy Blackburn at 774-8772 ext. 455 or e-mail [jblackburn@dailynews.vi](mailto:jblackburn@dailynews.vi).