

VIWMA to Host Public Hearing on Solid Waste Management Plan

stthomassource.com/content/2026/04/08/viwma-to-host-public-hearing-on-solid-waste-management-plan/?fbclid=IwdGRleARD_K1leHRuA2FibQIxMQBzcnRjBmFwcF9pZAo2Njl4NTY4Mzc5AAEeJsjtqICDpEwUwGDIapa-4HIMNX-BJzxXeJesRV7rtZuD8dSsk0fZmvfmz4Y_aem_zLG5yyYcFHS7K4MMqOTvLQ

April 8, 2026



The VI Waste Management Authority's logo is painted into the school's mural, encouraging residents to take pride in keeping the territory clean as officials seek public input on future waste management strategies. (Source photo by Adisha Penn)

Residents across the U.S. Virgin Islands will have a chance Thursday evening to weigh in on how the territory manages its waste, as officials present a draft plan and seek public input before finalizing it.

The V.I. Waste Management Authority will host a public hearing Thursday from 5:30 to 7 p.m. to hear public comments and share highlights of its Solid Waste Integrated Sustainable Material Management Plan, which covers everything from household trash to appliances, glass, plastics and vegetative debris.

The public hearing will be held at UVI's 13D Innovation Center on St. Thomas, Alfredo Andrews Elementary School on St. Croix, and the Legislature of the Virgin Islands Annex on St. John, as well as via Zoom at meeting ID 743 7657 9756 with password "solidwaste."

Greg Guannel, director of the Caribbean Green Technology Center at the University of the Virgin Islands, said the meeting is centered on both presenting the plan and gathering feedback from the community.

Let Voters
Get to Know
your Platform!

- ★ Policies, platforms, and values
- ★ Leadership qualities, integrity, and honesty
- ★ Track record, experience, and accomplishments

**Advertise your Campaign
with the Source!**

Contact:
advertising@visource.com

THE Source
US VIRGIN ISLANDS

"The purpose of the meeting is to have people provide their thoughts. We are really wanting to hear where people stand, what their issues are, so that we make sure that the plan is not just based on what we think," Guannel said.

The draft plan outlines potential strategies for managing different types of waste, including recycling, composting and waste-to-energy approaches. Guannel said officials are looking not only for reactions to those ideas, but also for new ones.

“We have developed some strategies, but we want to make sure that those strategies resonate with the public and that the public understands why those strategies were adopted,” he said. “Maybe there’s something we missed or ideas we haven’t considered, so we want to hear about that as well — both reactions to the plan, but also ideas or desires.”

Guannel said residents can provide “comments on anything they think about related to solid waste, from recycling to composting to waste-to-energy.”

Dawn Lisa Henry, interim CEO of Island Green and an environmental advocate, said she is eager to see how vegetative debris is addressed in the plan and is encouraging residents to speak out on the issue at Thursday’s hearing.

“I am eager to hear the different components that are going to comprise their waste management strategy, and I’m really hoping that when it comes to our vegetative debris, that they are going to be talking about composting, mulching and chipping, which are higher beneficial uses for this resource than burning it,” Henry said.

Her comments come as lawmakers consider Bill 36-0232, which would reverse the territory’s “Ban the Burn” law and allow the use of air curtain incinerators to dispose of vegetative waste. The technology has previously been restricted due to concerns about emissions of hazardous gases, chemicals and fine particulate matter.

Henry said the proposal has prompted a broader effort among [environmental groups](#), including a petition opposing the measure, and she urged residents to make their voices heard.

Henry said the meeting is intended as an opportunity for advocates to get their concerns about air curtain incinerators on the record while also connecting the issue to broader sustainability goals.

“We’re talking about food security, and I don’t want this just to be a conversation – I want to see it become reality,” Henry said. “It’s not unimaginable for any Virgin Islander to see the possibility of us being cut off at any time and not being able to receive our supplies from the mainland. What would we do? Because we’re 100% dependent, and we need to start charting that course toward growing more food here to sustain our people.”

In a press release, Island Green also praised the V.I. Waste Management Authority and the University of the Virgin Islands Caribbean Green Technology Center for engaging the public and said residents should use the hearing to weigh in on what they want, and what they don’t.

“I am hoping people show up tomorrow to voice their opposition to waste management using air curtain incinerators as the need for managing our vegetative debris,” Henry said. “We need to start a vigorous composting program in the territory, and as a community, we are here to support that effort. They do not stand alone.”

Keeping our community informed is our top priority.

If you have a news tip to share, please call or text us at 340-244-6631.

Support local + independent journalism in the U.S. Virgin Islands

Unlike many news organizations, we haven't put up a paywall – we want to keep our journalism as accessible as we can. Our independent journalism costs time, money and hard work to keep you informed, but we do it because we believe that it matters. We know that informed communities are empowered ones. If you appreciate our reporting and want to help make our future more secure, please consider donating.

[Donate](#)