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### **Virgin Islands Housing Authority to Save \$1.1M in Water, Electricity with Efficiency Improvements**

March 12, 2007— The Virgin Islands Housing Authority (VIHA) will invest \$6.7 million in energy efficiency upgrades at eight of its developments to reduce the cost of water and electricity and use future utility savings to pay for the improvements, VIHA Administrator Michael Hollis announced today. The energy efficiency upgrades will reduce VIHA's annual water bill by more than \$835,000 and will trim tenant-paid electric bills at the targeted developments by \$235,000. Improvements include low flow toilets, faucet aerators, efficient showerheads, water submeters, leak detection devices and leak repair, replacement of underground water piping at two properties, and energy efficient lighting. Installation of the efficiency measures will be completed at the VIHA communities by the end of the year. The housing developments impacted include 1,074 total housing units at Estate Tutu Apartments, Estate Buvoni Apartments, the Knolls at Contant, D. Hamilton Jackson Terrace, Alphonso Gerard Complex, Marley Homes, Marley Addition, Mount Pleasant and Joseph E. James Terrace. Taking advantage of a HUD program designed to encourage public housing agencies to make efficiency improvements, VIHA will use the savings generated by the project to pay for the improvements over the course of a 12 year, low-interest loan. Ameresco, an energy services company hired in December, 2004, will be responsible for the installation of the efficiency measures. The company guarantees that the cost savings from the equipment upgrades will meet or exceed the annual costs to retire the loan over the next 12 years. In addition to paying for the infrastructure improvements, VIHA will save at least an additional \$2.5 million over the life of the program that can be used for other improvements to the housing communities. Ameresco is also responsible for annual resident education and maintenance staff training on the new equipment, with a focus on practices that can help the residents and agency reduce their utility bills. Additionally, Ameresco will work closely with VIHA maintenance staff, conducting periodic equipment inspections, and monitoring the monthly utility savings.

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