



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR

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HAWAII DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH HOLDS FREE WORKSHOP ON UNEXPLODED MILITARY ORDNANCE (UXO)

***Waikoloa Marriott Hotel and via Webinar
Friday, Oct. 17, 2014 (9 a.m. – 3 p.m.)***

WAIKOLOA, HAWAII – Cleanup is currently underway at the 'Waikoloa Maneuver Area,' the single largest site in the nation contaminated with unexploded ordnance. Completing the task will be an enormous, expensive and long-term job with total cost to cleanup unexploded ordnance in the formerly used 'live-fire' training area estimated to be approximately \$750 million and expected to take decades. On Friday, October 17, the Department will sponsor the first Hawaii Workshop on Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) at the Waikoloa Beach Marriott.

The site in question occupies over 100,000 acres in the Waikoloa area of Hawaii Island. The site was acquired from Parker Ranch in 1943 during World War II. From 1943-1946 the 'Waikoloa Maneuver Area' was used extensively to simulate realistic battle conditions using live artillery, ammunition, and explosives. The area was large enough to train an entire division of troops at once on the same day. This site is one of several UXO areas throughout the state.

Cleanup is being conducted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and the Department of the Army (DOA) under the regulatory oversight of the Hawaii Department of Health and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The cleanup work follows a very thorough process prescribed by the federal Superfund law.

In addition to the expected challenges, there is yet another major stumbling block to the cleanup process. Because much of the land is now in the hands of private owners, each of the owners must first grant the USACE an official Right of Entry (ROE). Although the USACE is willing to search out and dispose of the unexploded ordnance at no cost, owners are often reluctant to grant access to their property. Addressing this stumbling block is more important than ever since the USACE has just initiated cleanup in an area comprised of over 800 privately owned parcels of land. The Department of Health is urging landowners to grant access to their property for their own safety and protection.

“The workshop will explain to landowners the importance of granting access to their property and to allow the cleanup process to take place,” said Gary Gill, deputy director of the Environmental Health Administration. “The possibility of finding unexploded ordnance in this area is very real and Big Island land owners should take advantage of this no-cost offer from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to conduct this work for them. Private landowners could be required to conduct discovery and disposal of unexploded ordnance at their own expense in the future.”

The Department of Health UXO Workshop is funded by EPA and is intended for state and county officials, bankers, realtors, developers, resort owners, landowners and emergency responders. The day will be filled with expert speakers, informative display tables and facilitated roundtable discussions of the major issues. There will be personnel from the Department of Health, USACE and munitions disposal contractors on hand to answer questions and share their knowledge.

Anyone interested in attending the conference should contact Paul Chong, the DOH coordinator, at (808) 586-4256. For those unable to attend, the department is experimenting with a web link that will allow interested parties to observe the proceedings via an online webinar. To access the webinar, parties should enter the following URL in their web browser and follow the prompts:

<https://zoom.us/webinar/register/995575960>

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