



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR

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DIRECTOR

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**HAWAII DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH INVITES PUBLIC COMMENTS
ON DRAFT WATER QUALITY PLAN**

*Public Information Meeting on Oahu Sept. 16
Video Conference Centers for Neighbor Island Residents*

Finding solutions to address the state's most daunting water quality issues is not an easy task, but the Hawaii Department of Health (DOH), in collaboration with federal and county government agencies, has taken on the challenge and has prepared a comprehensive water quality draft plan for the public's input.

Hawaii DOH is holding an information meeting and is inviting the public to comment on the plan as part of the next stage in the plan's development. The draft plan can be viewed and downloaded at:

www.health.hawaii.gov/water

"We were tasked with a huge responsibility to protect Hawaii's water to meet the needs of Hawaii's nearly 1.3 million residents, visitors to our islands, and local businesses, including farms and other agricultural lands," said Gary Gill, deputy director of environmental health. "We approached this major undertaking by looking at existing and emerging issues against a backdrop of new federal regulations and changes in sea and weather patterns."

"With heightened attention on water quality today, this is by far one of the most definitive documents that will guide where we focus our attention and how we allocate our resources as a state. Ultimately, the plan will also inform statewide policy decisions," he added.

As part of the draft plan, the Hawaii DOH conducted a self-assessment of its own capabilities. The DOH's introspection resulted in plans for streamlined coordination and decision-making between the Clean Water Branch, the Safe Drinking Water Branch and the Wastewater Branch. Each of these branches oversees different aspects of water quality under the DOH.

Public Information Meeting

The public is invited to an information meeting to discuss the draft water quality plan.

Date: Tuesday, Sept. 16, 2014
Time: 1 - 3 p.m.
Location: AAFES Building, 5th Floor Conference Room
919 Ala Moana Blvd., Honolulu, Hawaii 96814
Parking: Metered stalls
Contact: Joanna L. Seto, P.E. at (808) 586-4258

Phone Conference

Oahu and neighbor island residents may participate in the information meeting by via phone conference.

Phone: (605) 562-0020
Meeting ID: 400-021-636

Video Conference

Neighbor island residents may go to the video conference center on their island.

Kauai

Location: Kauai District Health Office Conference Room, 3040 Umi St., Lihue
Parking: Limited metered stalls
Contact: Lori Vetter at (808) 241-3323 or Gary Ueunten at (808) 241-3322

Maui

Location: Maui District Health Office Conference Room B, 210 Imi Kala St., Suite 2014, Wailuku
Parking: Limited non-metered stalls
Contact: Roland Tejano at (808) 984-8232

Hilo

Location: Hilo Environmental Health Facility, Training Room, 1582 Kamehameha Ave., Hilo
Parking: Non-metered stalls
Contact: Theresa McGeehan-Takiue at (808) 933-0407

The public is encouraged to review the draft plan before the meeting and bring your comments and questions. The presentation material will be made available before the meeting at www.health.hawaii.gov/water. If there is insufficient time to address all the comments or questions during the meeting, they may be submitted via email to WQPComments@doh.hawaii.gov. The comment period on the Draft Water Quality Plan closes at 5 p.m. (HST) on Friday, Oct. 17, 2014.

The State Water Quality Plan is a crucial part of an integrated and coordinated program for the protection, conservation, and management of waters in the State of Hawaii. It is intended to promote and implement the proper conservation and development of the State's waters. The water quality plan describes ongoing work and future initiatives to protect and improve the State's water quality and is an important part of developing effective linkages between inter-agency programs.

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