

Safe Drinking Water Branch

Standard Comments

April 10, 2012

Safe Drinking Water Branch

The Safe Drinking Water Branch administers programs in the areas of: 1) public water systems; 2) underground injection control; and 3) groundwater protection. Our general comments on projects are as follows.

Public Water Systems

- Federal and state regulations define a public water system as a system that serves 25 or more individuals at least 60 days per year or has at least 15 service connections. All public water system owners and operators are required to comply with Hawaii Administrative Rules, Title 11, Chapter 20, titled Rules Relating to Public Water Systems.
- All new public water systems are required to demonstrate and meet minimum capacity requirements prior to their establishment. This requirement involves demonstration that the system will have satisfactory technical, managerial and financial capacity to enable the system to comply with safe drinking water standards and requirements.
- Projects that propose development of new sources of potable water serving or proposed to serve a public water system must comply with the terms of Section 11-20-29 of Chapter 20. This section requires that all new public water system sources be approved by the Director of Health prior to its use. Such approval is based primarily upon the submission of a satisfactory engineering report which addresses the requirements set in Section 11-20-29.
- The engineering report must identify all potential sources of contamination and evaluate alternative control measures which could be implemented to reduce or eliminate the potential for contamination, including treatment of the water source. In addition, water quality analyses for all regulated contaminants, performed by a laboratory certified by the State Laboratories Division of the State of Hawaii, must be submitted as part of the report to demonstrate compliance with all drinking water standards. Additional parameters may be required by the Director for this submittal or additional tests required upon his or her review of the information submitted.
- All sources of public water systems must undergo a source water assessment which will delineate a source water protection area. This process is preliminary to the creation of a source water protection plan for that source and activities which will take place to protect the source of drinking water.
- Projects proposing to develop new public water systems or proposing substantial modifications to existing public water systems must receive approval by the Director of Health prior to construction of the proposed system or modification. These projects include treatment, storage and distribution systems of public water systems. The approval authority for projects owned and operated by a County Board or Department of Water or Water Supply has been delegated to them.
- All public water systems must be operated by certified distribution system and water treatment plant operators as defined by Hawaii Administrative Rules, Title 11, Chapter 11-25 titled; Rules Relating to Certification of Public Water System Operators.
- All projects which propose the use of dual water systems or the use of a non-potable water system in proximity to an existing potable water system to meet irrigation or other needs must be carefully designed and operated to prevent the cross-connection of these systems and prevent the possibility of backflow of water from the non-potable system to the potable system. The two systems must be clearly labeled and physically separated by air gaps or reduced pressure principle backflow prevention devices to avoid

contaminating the potable water supply. In addition backflow devices must be tested periodically to assure their proper operation. Further, all non-potable spigots and irrigated areas should be clearly labeled with warning signs to prevent the inadvertent consumption on non-potable water. Compliance with Hawaii Administrative Rules, Title 11, Chapter 11-21 titled; Cross-Connection and Backflow Control is also required.

- All projects which propose the establishment of a potentially contaminating activity (as identified in the Hawai`i Source Water Assessment Plan) within the source water protection area of an existing source of water for a public water supply should address this potential and activities that will be implemented to prevent or reduce the potential for contamination of the drinking water source.
- For further information concerning the application of capacity, new source approval, operator certification, source water assessment, backflow/cross-connection prevention or other public water system programs, please contact the Safe Drinking Water Branch at 586-4258.

Underground Injection Control (UIC)

- Injection wells used for the subsurface disposal of wastewater, sewage effluent, or surface runoff are subject to environmental regulation and permitting under Hawai`i Administrative Rules, Title 11, Chapter 11-23, titled Underground Injection Control (UIC). The Department of Health's approval must be first obtained before any injection well construction commences. A UIC permit must be issued before any injection well operation occurs.
- Authorization to use an injection well is granted when a UIC permit is issued to the injection well facility. The UIC permit contains discharge and operation limitations, monitoring and reporting requirements, and other facility management and operational conditions. A complete UIC permit application form is needed to apply for a UIC permit.
- A UIC permit can have a valid duration of up to five years. Permit renewal is needed to keep an expiring permit valid for another term.

For further information about the UIC permit and the Underground Injection Control Program, please contact the UIC staff of the Safe Drinking Water Branch at 586-4258.

Groundwater Protection Program

- Projects that propose to develop a golf course are asked to use the Guidelines Applicable to Golf Courses in Hawai`i (Version 6) in order to address certain groundwater protection concerns, as well as other environmental concerns.