



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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In reply, please refer to:
File:

HAWAII STATE EMERGENCY RESPONSE COMMISSION
MEETING # 140 Friday, December 12, 2025, from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Hybrid Meeting: in-person at Red Conference Room, Uluakupu Building, located at 2385 Waimano Home Road, Pearl City, HI 96782 and via Zoom

Attendees

Voting: Kathleen Ho, Deputy Director of Environmental Health; Tom Eisen, Office of Planning and Sustainable Development; Scott Nishimoto, Dept. of Agriculture; Carlton Yamada, Honolulu County Local Emergency Planning Commission (LEPC); Abraham Mohr, Kauai County LEPC; Jeff Kihune, Maui County LEPC; Gerald Kosaki, Hawaii County LEPC; Dr. Yuanan Lu, Dr. Rosana Weldon, Thompson School of Social Work and Public Studies, UH.

Non-Voting: Grace Simmons, Elizabeth Galvez, Sharon Leonida, Isaiah Kela-Pacheco, Adam Teekell, Michael Pereira, Eric Matsuda, Dept. of Health, Hazard Evaluation and Emergency Response (HEER) Office; Shawn Carrier, Navy Region Hawaii; Andrew Kenrick, Pipeline Safety; Jason Geneau, Chris Curatilo, Preparedness, Service and Training; Melani Tescher NCTF-RH, US Navy; John Perkins, Matthew Lockman, U.S. Marine Corps, Eric Jensen Tetra Tech; Kevin Cooper, Joshua Shmimabukuro, Jesse Harms, Edward Oingerany, USCG

1. The meeting was called to order at 9:13 am by Kathy Ho.
 - Introduction of attendees was made on Zoom and in person.
 - There was a motion to approve the minutes from meeting #139. The motion to approve was accepted.
 - Kathy did a roll call of members.

2. LEPC Updates:

2.1 Hawaii County: Gerald Kosaki, LEPC Chair

The last LEPC meeting was on December 4, 2025; eleven members and six non-members attended.

Gerald announced that due to retirements, there were new promotions. Chris Caballo is now Assistant Chief of Operations. He will be representing the fire department. Lono Lindsey is the new Special Operations Battalion Chief, and he will represent HazMat. Keely Kanai will be representing the Emergency Medical Services, EMS.

The Pohakuloa Training Area (PTA) has a new Assistant Chief on the federal side of the organization. Logan Rogers started four months ago.

Talmadge Magno of the Hawaii Civil Defense announced his retirement, possibly in July of 2026.

Chris Leonard of News West Broadcasting reported that his company has completed several projects in the Hawaiian Ocean View area. Additional towers were built to provide the area with better coverage and improve communications. This area is past South Point, going to Kona.

Cyan Becher from Hilo Valley Medical Center gave a report on the decontamination drill that the medical center held. A signal lane system was used for the drill. Coordinators realized this had created a backlog of people waiting to be decontaminated. The hospital is working to streamline the process to allow more people to be decontaminated more quickly.

Pipeline update from Andrew Kendrick, regarding new regulations on reporting a potential leak or spill. If a worker suspects that a leak or spill has occurred, the worker will call 911. The operator receiving the call will then notify the appropriate agencies of a possible leak. If no leak occurred, a notification is sent out to the agencies that were contacted.

2.1.2 Training:

The National Association of SARA Title III Program Officials, NASTTPO, will be held April 27 – 30, 2026, in Billings, Montana. The Hawaii LEPC committee would like Talmadge to attend. Gerald believes that having Talmadge attend would give him knowledge that he could pass on to the next director. This trip would need approval from the mayor and the finance director.

Jason Geneau gave an update on the Hazmat Annex Plan. A workshop was held after the LEPC meeting regarding the parts of the plan that need to be changed.

2.1.3 Incidents:

Hawaiian Electric Light Company, HELCO, reported a non-PCB mineral oil spill on November 19th. A pickup truck hit a transformer; HELCO did the cleanup. None of the mineral oil had gone into the drain, waterways, or streams.

2.1.4 Purchase of Equipment:

The LEPC approved funding for the purchase of six (6) push-to-talk radios.

Three radios would be assigned to Makalei station in West Hawaii, and three to Kaimana in East Hawaii. Gerald explained how the radio works. The cost of the radio is \$11,000.

The next LEPC meeting is scheduled for February 19th, 2026.

2.2 Kauai County: Abraham Mohr, LEPC Chair,

The last LEPC meeting was on October 21, 2025. The Hazmat Annex meeting was held following the LEPC meeting.

2.2.1 Training:

Abe, a deputy chief from the fire department, and two personnel from the Public Works, Solid Waste Division attended the Ukumehame Lithium-ion Training. Kauai is developing a plan for its own use. Abe has been working on Standard Operating Guidelines for lithium-ion batteries. Also working with Solid Waste to have Standard Operating Guidelines for their trucks and their refuse transfer stations. Abe also had meetings with the Mayor's Public Information Office, the Solid Waste Office, and the managing director. The county is establishing a working group to determine how to address this issue and keep everyone informed about the risks.

The annual HazMat Refresher Training was being held on Kauai in December 10, 11, 12. Mr. Chris Webber from Dr. Hazmat is the instructor.

Approximately \$10,000 has been set aside for confined-space training. The chiefs want it to be under our HazMat program. We will be sending five personnel to Oregon for that training.

2.2.2 Purchase:

Abe has done paperwork for a hardline communications system and a Supplied Air System for confined space training.

2.2.3 Incidents:

A hundred and twenty (120) nickel-iron batteries are still waiting to be shipped off the island. This is from the home in Kapa'a that used the batteries to power a solar system.

Fire responded to an electric foil surfboard incident; the battery was on fire underwater. It was buried under the sand, and the owners later took it home. A similar incident involved a DeWalt battery in the back of a truck that was off-gassing. The owner also took the battery home.

The fire department was called by the owners of three (3) Jackey portable power units used for camping, which were also off-gassing. The party responsible called the Solid and Hazardous Waste Branch to request removal. Batteries may still be on the owner's property.

There was a propane incident; someone broke a line. The gas company was called for assistance.

2.3 Maui County: Jeff Kihune, LEPC Chair

The last LEPC meeting was on October 15th. This meeting had the largest attendance in ten years. There were eight members and thirteen non-members. The non-members were from different agencies.

Liz Galvez discussed the public meeting regarding Lithium-ion batteries owners or operators be subject to emergency planning requirements scheduled for that day.

Sharon would also be attending the same meeting. Maui Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) gives a report on the Lithium-ion battery project that they were involved in with the EPA. This also included the project in the Ukumehana area.

This was about sixty acres of cleanup of a homeless encampment. Hazardous waste was part of the 26,000 pounds of batteries that were de-energized. A new project is underway at Waialae Road in Kahaluu. It is 51 acres and started in October. They are trying to finish this clean-up.

Jeff attended one day of the battery clean-up project.

Jason did an update of the hazmat annex at the meeting. The Hazmat Annex workshop was held after the LEPC Meeting.

The next LEPC meeting is scheduled for January 15, 2025.

2.3.1 Training:

Hazmat 10 attended the Electric Vehicle processing site at Ukumehana. They also conducted air monitoring when the waste was sent to the landfill before it was shipped off the island.

2.3.2 Incidents:

On October 11, a 125-pound leaking propane tank was on Lanai. Hawaii Gas removed and replaced the tank.

On December 6, a non-profit clean-up group called the fire department to report two EV batteries on Pileo Road in Kahaluu. Hazmat 10 conducted testing and monitoring and found no leaks or excessive heat. The fire department has a dumpster for storing batteries.

2.4 Honolulu County: Carlton Yamada, LEPC Chair

The LEPC meeting was held on December 9th in the DOH conference room.

There were 28 attendees, and three were on Zoom. The LEPC meeting was held first followed by a short break, and the Hazmat Annex meeting with Jason from Preparedness, Services, and Training began.

2.4.1 Guest Speakers:

The Honolulu Incident Management Division provided an update on the marine environmental response for the past quarter.

2.4.2 Events, Pre-planning activities, Training:

There are currently no refresher training courses scheduled.

Hazmat units attended Liquid Natural Gas training with Hawaii Gas in October. The Honolulu Police Department has asked if they could participate in this training. HPD has a hazardous materials component within their agency. Both the fire and police departments try to share the

training that they are invited to attend.

2.4.3 Incidents:

On September 29th, the first Hawaiian bank in Waikiki was robbed. A powdered substance was released. It turned out to be pepper spray. This was a chemical attack.

Police requested fire hazmat to the bank location to provide sample testing.

On October 23, a refrigerator leak was reported at Foodland in Laie.

The cooling units were old, and one of the valves failed and released the refrigerant. This happened when the store was about to close; there were no problems with evacuating the store. Monitoring was done to check if anymore refrigerant was being released. The contractor for the refrigerant arrived on scene and verified that the fire department had stopped the leak. On October 24th, a diesel spill occurred at Pier 2. It was spilling from the top of the tank truck to the pier. There were about 90 gallons spilled, and 50 gallons were recovered. No fuel entered the waterways. The company usually handles these types of situations. There was a question about why the fire department was called to the pier. This may be part of the company's emergency plans to call the fire department.

On November 21, a carbon monoxide alarm came in from the new Manoa Graduate Student dormitory. The building was evacuated; fire could not detect any carbon monoxide. Carbon monoxide/ smoke detectors have had false activations before. This is a new building, and problems with the systems may occur. None of the equipment detected any carbon monoxide. The students were allowed to return to the building.

Carlton received an advisory on the proper disposal of small and medium-sized Lithium-ion batteries from Liz. This included a list of locations where you can take them for disposal.

The next LEPC meeting is on March 17, 2026.

The Hazmat Annex presentation completed the second half of the meeting.

3 Updates on Notice for Public Comment and Public Meetings for owners and/or Operators of Facilities with 10,000 lbs. or more of Lithium-ion Batteries:

Sharon Leonida:

Notices were placed in the Star Advertiser on September 28 and October 12, 2025 and published in the Environmental Notice for DBEDT, and on the HEER Office website. The public meeting was held on October 15, from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm, in the Red Conference Room at the Uluakupu Building. The comment period was open from October 1st to October 31, 2025. Comments could be submitted by e-mail or sent to the address provided. Questions and answers will be provided at this meeting. We will notify individuals who submitted questions by using

the contact information provided, and this information will also be posted on our website. The Hawaii Administrative Rules 11-453-17 were read. This explains what a facility should do when filing a report to the HEER Office.

A former county worker commended the HEER Office for taking this action.

One of the questions came from a company that provides power to Hawaii residents.

Question: How to determine the weight of the battery? By the weight of the entire Battery or weight of the lithium itself?

Answer – By the weight of the entire battery.

Question – (from the same company), Does the facility representative need to be on the same island as the facility?

Answer – We request a local representative be on the island, with a local number that would be able to respond to the site.

Question – (same company) If the Lithium is already being reported using a percentage of the chemical, does it also have to be reported by the total weight of the battery?

Answer – No, a chemical should be reported only once.

Question – (public meeting) This concerns condo-building where there is a large number of electric vehicles whose weight would total 10,000 pounds. Would that condo be required to have a facility emergency coordinator?

Answer – No, we are not looking for individual car or homeowners to report to us. We encourage the condo association to have an emergency response plan.

Question – (public meeting) If an accident should happen in a condo with lithium-ion batteries. EVs that are parked in a building that has a weight greater than 10,000 pounds: do you see this expanding so every condo and shopping center should have a facility emergency coordinator?

Answer- At this time, we do not have an answer. We are taking questions down. We do encourage people who live in condos or who have EVs to have an emergency plan.

There was an initial survey conducted by HEER using e-mails and calls to locate businesses that store uses or manufactures lithium-ion batteries totaling 10,000 pounds. The purpose of the survey was to identify businesses that could be bringing in lithium-ion batteries that would total 10,000 pounds in their stores.

O'Reilly and NAPA Auto Parts, Hawthorne Pacific, Firestone, Goodyear, lex Brodie were all contacted and asked if they intended to store and sell lithium-ion batteries. They will be using the regular lead acid batteries. They have told their customers that electric vehicles should be serviced by the dealerships.

Battery Bill and Costco bring in solar generators with lithium-ion batteries. They are not bringing in large amounts of these generators. These batteries will not be within the 10,000-pound reporting limits.

AES Solar has filed for five facilities, and Clearway Energy has filed for four facilities. Both ship in their own special batteries and ship out any damaged or used batteries through their own companies.

Hi Power Solar is a company that does installation for private residences.

They contract to do jobs and bring in supplies as needed. They do not store batteries. They use the Tesla battery that weighs 251.3 pounds. The maximum number of batteries used for a private residence are two batteries, which

total 502.6 pounds. This is well below the 10,000 pounds needed to report. Servco Toyota has hybrid vehicles which use a nickel metal Hydride batteries. They ship in batteries as needed and do their own disposal. They do not store batteries for EV. Ford uses the same system as Toyota.

The recommendation to the commissioners is to have HEER Office proceed with plans to have these facilities that meet these requirements be subject to emergency planning requirements.

4 HSERC Financial Report Tier II Division of Funds: HSERC, LEPC

Kathy explained how the funds collected from the Tier II filings are due yearly. Sharon gave details on how the amount of funds for each county is based on the number of paying facilities that file each year. She also read the total amount of funds and the amount each county would receive.

A motion was made by Gerald Kosaki for the commission to approve the division of funds for each county.

Kathy called for a show of hands from the commission members to approve the motion. Motion was approved

5. County HAZMAT Planning, Validation, and Adoption: Jason Geneau Preparedness Service and Training LLC

Jason from PST gave an update of the Hazmat Annex. Workshops for all four counties have been completed. This included site visits to Lanai and Molokai. Jason advised the best approach seemed to be combining the LEPC meetings and the workshops together. The drafts for all counties are in process, or they are pending validation.

Kauai conducted their validation workshop last week. Some changes will be made to the draft. A lot of the same issues are coming up in all the LEPCs workshops.

These plans will be tailored to each county. However, there are a lot of similarities in the challenges that they have, and what capabilities are available statewide. All the counties would like these plans to meet the LEPC requirements and also become the ESF #10, the Oil and Hazmat Response Annex for the counties. This would fit in with the ESF 10 at the state level.

Jason discussed the use of the current Hazmat levels. Are they necessary? Should they be replaced? Look into the best practices nationwide and see if there is value in having it the same for the whole state.

These are some items being reviewed and included in the draft.

More discussions will need to be done before the draft can be put into the ESF – 10.

There is a need to look into the LEPC requirements under EPCRA and HEPICRA. Some of the LEPCs have by-laws, others do not. A placeholder has

been included in the draft, for counties without bylaws. Templates have been provided for their use. It would be beneficial to have the LEPC requirements in the ESF-10 to avoid managing multiple documents. Kauai's validation workshop is completed. Drafts for the other counties will be sent out and there will be an updated draft for Kauai. Jason would like to continue having the workshops with the LEPC meetings. If this time frame works, the final workshop would be in March. As part of the project, there will be residual support for these plans. PST offers support if there is a need to be there for a meeting or to report to various elected officials to talk about the project. PST will offer support for at least six (6) months after the final drafts are given to the counties. The Hazmat Annex plans will require some legal review of the documents. Many of the counties are updating their emergency operations plans and turning it into a comprehensive emergency management plan. The state has already completed this. Jason explained that having a CEMP will fit in with these annexes. Future plans may include a WMD event.

6. USEPA Updates, including Current Handouts when available: Lt. Commander Jesse Harms for Bill Jones:
Commander Harms is a co-chair for the Oceania Regional Response Team, ORRT, with Bill Jones. The ORRT also includes Guam, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, CNMI, American Samoa, and also the international partnerships that have been established. There will be a meeting with the ORRT January 21 and 22, 2026. On January 22, there will be a lithium-ion training from 8:00 am – 12:00 pm. The tabletop exercise will be from 1:00 – 4:30 pm. Greg Jenkins has created a training program similar to what was done at Los Angeles. This scenario involves a container vessel in the port of Honolulu. This is on salvage, Marine firefighting, and lithium-ion batteries, and how it will work in major ports. We need a good, systematic way that will work with all levels of government. The tabletop and exercise will have a broad audience; we have fifty in-person attendees, and sixty to seventy will join online. We are still contacting more agencies to attend the meeting and training. Captain of the port of Honolulu, Nick Worst will be there. The Coast Guard Admiral will also be there. There is a need for lithium-ion battery training in the Maritime realm. We need to be offensive instead of defensive about how these fires may impact things. There are many lessons learned from the Los Angeles and Long Beach fires. Because of the previous preparations that were made, when an actual event happened, the LA port authorities could reopen the port in seven hours. Hawaii's local and national leadership needs to move toward getting training and planning that is needed here. These practices could be offered to our

partners in the ORRT.

Commander Harm referred to the National Security Strategy that was released by the federal government. This document is aimed at the United States being able to address our own issues. There will be funding available that can be used for training and planning. There is a salvage and marine firefighting sub-committee that is part of the area committee, that the Coast Guard and EPA, as well as many of you, are a part of.

The Area Maritime Security Committee has access to the Federal Emergency Management Agency, FEMA, grants. There are very real funds in these grants that can be used for the port.

Getting the counties, state and federal officials involved in this project can get these ideas into a plan that can be used to request funds. January 22nd training, we want everyone to hear these messages. This will be very good training, we have done it before. The international community has joined in. Some of the participants include: Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Nauru, American Samoa, Samoa, and Manualu.

People who are receiving lots of Lithium-ion batteries and don't have good system in place, are reaching out. Commander Harm has asked HEER to send out information on the January 22nd training.

7. Hazard Materials Emergency Preparedness (HMEP) update: Harold Lao

Harold received a notice for the HMEP Grant of \$134,350.

A second notice was issued stating that the amount would be reduced.

Harold is waiting for more information.

Harold explained about the three (3), year cycle of this fund. This is the first year, it may change next year. It will stay within the \$134,000 range during the three years.

8. Updates on the Health Department: Kathleen Ho

The health department is preparing for the legislative year.

There is only one piece of legislation that is in the administration package. This is for a Food and Drug branch. We are changing some of the authorities that are in Chapter 321 and moving it to our Food and Drug Branch.

At the next HSERC, Liz will give a presentation on the Ukumehame project.

9. Announcements from other Agencies: HSERC, LEPC

Doctor Yuanan Lu from the Public Health Studies University Of Hawaii, will be retiring. He introduced Dr. Rosana Weldon

from the Thompson School of Social Work and Public Health Studies
as the new member who will be representing the university.

10. Open Forum: Public comment on issues not on the agenda:
There are no comments.

The next HSERC Meeting is scheduled for March 20, 2025.
The meeting was adjourned at 10:13 am.