



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

VIRGINIA PRESSLER, MD
DIRECTOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 6, 2016

16-043

**HAWAII STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH URGES PUBLIC TO
STAY CLEAR OF AREAS NEAR KEWALO SMALL BOAT HARBOR**

Warning signs at the Kewalo Basin Small Boat Harbor are advising the public to stay clear of the area that may have been affected by a sewage release that occurred over the Fourth of July weekend.

Sewage has puddled on roads within the harbor, with limited quantities spilling into nearby harbor waters. Harbor users are advised to avoid contact with waters in areas near the sign postings. The warning signs will remain up until water quality has returned to normal.

The Department of Health's (DOH) Clean Water Branch, which responds to sewage spills that reach State waters, is responsible for protecting public health and the environment by prohibiting discharges that impair water quality to keep Hawaii's waters fishable and swimmable for all people. The Clean Water Branch conducted an investigation at Kewalo Small Boat Harbor, the site of a reported sewage spill, and will begin water quality monitoring for three days, beginning tomorrow, July 7. DOH will provide updates on the sewage response efforts.

Clean Water Branch inspectors learned the sewage overflows began on Sunday, July 3, 2016, and occurred intermittently from manhole covers located near the Kewalo Basin comfort station (nearest to Ala Moana Boulevard). The Hawaii Community Development Authority (HCDA) reported the sewage spill on July 5, 2016, when it was notified of the overflows.

According to information gathered by DOH, HCDA mitigated the problem by closing the nearest comfort station. HCDA has contacted plumbers and repairs will begin as soon as possible.

Additional comfort stations in the Kewalo Basin Small Boat Harbor will be closed until repairs are complete.

Although an investigation is still underway, the ongoing sewage spill is suspected to be due to a blockage in the sewer lateral connecting the Kewalo Basin comfort stations to the main line on Ala Moana Blvd. The total volume of the sewage spill is unknown as the overflows were intermittent.

Owners and operators of wastewater systems must comply with environmental regulations that are in place to protect the public. Failure to do results in legal action by the State, Federal partners and/or private citizens.

#