



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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NEWS RELEASE

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Hawaii Department of Health Meets EPA Interim Targets Ahead of Jan. 29 Deadline; More Funding for Water Quality Projects in Four Counties

HONOLULU -- The Hawaii State Department of Health Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Program disbursed more than \$10.36 million in federal funds in the last half of 2015 to support infrastructure improvements in the public water systems for all four counties. This exceeded the interim target of \$7.67 million in disbursements.

In addition, as of Jan. 4, the Department of Health made commitments to provide funding totaling over \$32.7 million, exceeding the \$28.28 million interim target.

The commitments for the four Hawaii County Department of Water Supply water system improvement projects include:

- Over \$4.1 million for the Laupahoehoe Reservoir;
- Almost \$12.9 million for the Waimea Water Treatment Plant microfiltration project;
- \$823,420 for phase one of the Halaula well development project; and
- \$3.2 million for the Ahualoa-Honokaa transmission waterline.

The Honolulu Board of Water Supply commitment involves \$11.65 million for multiple water system improvements.

Each year, Congress appropriates funds that are administered by the EPA to provide grants to states to capitalize low-interest loan programs for public water system infrastructure improvements. The funds come with stipulations. This year, Hawaii had to meet two interim requirements by Jan. 29, 2016, and these were met well ahead of schedule by Jan. 4, 2016.

“We must continually demonstrate our stewardship of the federal funds and account for how the funds are being used before we can receive additional funds,” said Joanna Seto, Safe Drinking Water Branch chief. “Our SRF team and County customers were all aware of the pending deadline and what was at stake. There was great teamwork and collaboration to meet the deadline.”

The EPA awarded the Hawaii Department of Health \$688,000 on Sept. 28, 2015, and withheld a little over \$8 million in federal funds, pending the Department of Health’s ability to meet specific targets by Jan. 29, 2016. Since it began in 1997, the Drinking

Water State Revolving Fund has disbursed more than \$201.5 million in low interest loans.

Background

There are two funds for water system infrastructure improvement projects: the Clean Water State Revolving Fund infrastructure loan program, established by the Clean Water Act of 1987, and the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund infrastructure loan program, established by the Safe Drinking Water Act Amendments of 1996.

The Clean Water State Revolving Fund, which is also referred to as Hawaii's Water Pollution Control Revolving Fund, provides low-interest loans to Hawaii's four counties to construct high-priority wastewater, storm water, and non-point source water pollution projects. Since it began in 1991, the Clean Water State Revolving Fund has disbursed more than \$705.8 million in low-interest loans, providing significant savings in interest costs to the counties.

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