



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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DOH'S NEW ONLINE TOOL TRACKS GROUNDWATER CONTAMINANTS *Current conditions within federal, state safe parameters*

HONOLULU – The Hawaii State Department of Health (DOH) Safe Drinking Water Branch has developed an online tool, called the Groundwater Contamination Viewer, which features an interactive map showing groundwater conditions at key locations throughout the state. The viewer is available on the DOH website at <http://health.hawaii.gov/sdwb/groundwater-contamination-viewer/>.

The DOH continually monitors groundwater to ensure contaminants remain at safe levels based on federal and state standards, and determines if treatment is required before the water is used for human consumption. Presently, organic contaminants detected in groundwater sites in Hawaii are within safe parameters and do not pose any health hazard.

The DOH developed the viewer proactively to provide full disclosure of the organic contaminants.

“It’s important to note that groundwater quality is not necessarily an indication of drinking water quality,” said Gary Gill, DOH deputy director for environmental health. “If water needs to be treated, Hawaii has more than 130 regulated water systems, all of which are designed to remove harmful contaminants from drinking water before it reaches the faucets in homes.”

The viewer also includes a “glossary” that describes the potential health effects of high levels of detected chemicals as well as possible contaminant sources.

Developed as part of the Abercrombie Administration’s effort to transform and make state government resources more accessible to the public, the new tool was a collaborative effort, led by the Hawaii DOH with input from all four counties, the Hawaii Department of Agriculture, Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources’ Commission on Water Resource Management, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 9.

The viewer displays data from DOH's Safe Drinking Water Information System and is searchable by contaminant going back to the year 2000. Data is constantly being uploaded. The Safe Drinking Water Branch plans to incorporate groundwater quality data from other sources, including the U.S. Geological Survey and the University of Hawaii.

The DOH Safe Drinking Water Branch protects Hawaii's drinking water sources (surface water and groundwater) from contamination and assures that owners and operators of public water systems provide safe drinking water to the community. For more information on state drinking water programs go to:

<http://health.hawaii.gov/sdwb/>

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