



## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Air Quality Awareness Week April 30 - May 4

HONOLULU – During national Air Quality Awareness Week on April 30 – May 4, the Hawai'i Department of Health (DOH) Clean Air Branch (CAB) reminds the public that air quality affects everyone's health and the responsibility of improving air quality for future generations falls on all of us.

Each year, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and its AirNow partners observe Air Quality Awareness Week to raise public awareness about the crucial role that air quality has on overall health and to inspire people to take steps to reduce air pollution. The DOH partners with the EPA to post air quality data and forecasts for Hawai'i on the national AirNow website at <https://www.airnow.gov/>.

The department also offers additional resources for the public to learn more about air quality in Hawai'i. The following websites provide a variety of tools and information about vog and sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) from the Kilauea volcano:

- the Hawai'i Interagency Vog Information Dashboard at <http://ivhnh.org/vog/content/vog-information-portal>,
- the VMAP Vog Measurement and Prediction Project at <http://mkwc.ifa.hawaii.edu/vmap/hysplit/> and
- the Hawai'i Short Term SO<sub>2</sub> Advisory website at <http://health.hawaii.gov/cab/>.

Efforts such as Hawaii's Clean Energy Initiative and Renewable Portfolio Standards, which promote the use of cleaner fuels and sources of energy, are underway, helping to improve Hawai'i's air quality. However, Hawaii still faces many air challenges, including fossil fuel pollution, vog and climate change.

"Every day we make choices that affect our air quality," said Marianne Rossio, Clean Air Branch manager. "Everyone must do their part to help prevent and reduce the release of harmful air pollutants to protect our environment for a clean and sustainable future."

The DOH urges everyone to help to improve air quality in Hawai'i by taking actions such as:

- Making healthier transportation choices such as biking, walking, carpooling, taking the bus, avoiding excessive idling of your automobile and maintaining your vehicle.

- Decreasing energy usage by turning off lights when not in use, using energy efficient lighting and appliances, opening windows instead of using an air conditioner, line drying clothes; and
- Reducing, reusing and recycling.

The Hawai'i Department of Health Clean Air Branch works diligently to regulate the state's air pollution sources, coordinate efforts to maintain federal and state ambient air quality standards, and protect the public from exposure to toxic air contaminants. In conjunction with the DOH State Laboratories Division, the Branch maintains Hawai'i's statewide ambient air monitoring network with 13 air monitoring stations located throughout the Hawaiian Islands, measuring SO<sub>2</sub>, carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), hydrogen sulfide (H<sub>2</sub>S), ozone (O<sub>3</sub>) and particulate matter. Hawai'i ambient air quality data from these monitoring stations can be viewed at <http://emdweb.doh.hawaii.gov/air-quality/>.

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