



## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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## **Kaua'i District Health Office releases final report on island-wide preparedness survey**

LĪHU'E, HI – The Department of Health's (DOH) Kaua'i District Health Office conducted door-to-door surveys in July at randomly selected households island-wide to assess preparedness levels and evacuation plans. Over the course of three days, survey teams completed a total of 186 interviews, collecting valuable data about the island's residents, their health status, preparedness levels and evacuation plans.

The survey methodology, known as a Community Assessment for Public Health Emergency Response (CASPER), is a validated health needs assessment methodology developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to rapidly obtain information about the health and resource needs of a community pre- and post-disaster. Information obtained is generalizable to the entire sampling frame, providing population-based estimates. The CASPER survey has been conducted each year on Kaua'i since July 2017.

From 2018 to 2019, statistically significant increases were observed across several household emergency preparedness indicators. For example, the percentage of Kaua'i households with a 14-day supply of non-perishable food increased from 41 to 44 percent, while the percentage of households with a 14-day supply of water increased from 20 to 28 percent. Combined, the percentage of households with a 14-day supply of both food and water increased from 14 to 18 percent, representing a 29 percent increase over a one-year period.

"Although we've made significant improvements, we have a long way to go to reach the state's goal of 14 days' worth of emergency supplies for all households," said Lauren Guest, public health preparedness planner with the Kaua'i District Health Office. "Tracking community progress on indicators such as emergency supplies, evacuation plans, and communication sources allows emergency management partners to assess gaps, prioritize limited resources, and evaluate the impact of county, state, and non-profit efforts to achieve an informed and prepared community for all hazards."

Over the past three years, CASPERs have been an enormous capacity building exercise for the Department of Health and partner agencies, allowing collaboration across programmatic silos while increasing community awareness of agencies and the services they provide to the community. On Kaua'i, DOH has expanded its ability to rapidly deploy survey teams to assess health needs on the ground post-disaster, which can be used to inform emergency response priorities. Thanks to neighbor island participation in Kaua'i's 2019 CASPER, this capability has the potential to be expanded statewide.

The 2019 Kaua'i CASPER Final Report is available here:

<https://health.hawaii.gov/kauai/files/2019/09/Kauai-2019-CASPER-Final-Report.pdf>.

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