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New Red Hill emergency order sets expectations for safe defueling and closure of Red Hill

HONOLULU – The Hawai'i Department of Health (DOH) today issued an Emergency Order, Docket No. 22-UST-EA-01, regarding the defueling and closure of the 20 underground storage tanks, surge tanks, and associated piping at the Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility. The Emergency Order requires the Navy to provide a plan and schedule on the defueling and closure of the Red Hill facility.

The Navy must provide DOH with its independent contractor's assessment on facility operations by May 15, a plan and implementation schedule to defuel by June 30, and a plan for closure of the facility by November 1.

"Since DOH issued its Emergency Order in December, the Secretary of Defense issued a directive to defuel and decommission Red Hill. This Emergency Order is critical to our efforts to oversee the safe defueling and closure of the facility," said Kathleen Ho, Deputy Director of Environmental Health. "Our main focus is ensuring that defueling and closure operations are performed safely and expeditiously. This work will have consequences for us and for future generations, and on behalf of the people and environment of Hawai'i, we will hold the Navy accountable to honor its commitments."

The Emergency Order also requires the Navy to provide documents to DOH that will assist DOH in determining whether the plans are protective of public health and the environment. While the Navy had set internal deadlines on plans to defuel and close the Red Hill facility, the Emergency Order sets forth DOH's expectations on submission of these plans.

The Emergency Order issued today replaces DOH's December 6, 2021 Emergency Order. The Navy is ordered to:

- Maintain the suspension of operations at Red Hill, except for environmental controls, release detection, and release response protocols.
- Continue to maintain the groundwater treatment system at Red Hill Shaft and take steps to recover the Red Hill Shaft as a drinking water source. DOH must approve any water treatment systems prior to installation and operation.
- Provide a copy of the final assessment and related documents from the Navy's independent contractor, Simpson Gumpertz & Heger, Inc. The contractor was retained by the Navy to prepare the Red Hill workplans, conduct assessments, and recommend system repairs and improvements to safely defuel the Red Hill facility.
- Submit a phased plan for the defueling and closure of the Red Hill facility, which includes an implementation schedule. The defueling portion of the plan must be provided by June 30 for review and approval. The order also sets forth considerations for DOH as it evaluates the plan. A closure plan must be submitted to DOH no later than November 1 for review and approval.
- Meet with DOH on or before July 15 regarding planning and scheduling of the closure of Red Hill.
- Provide DOH documents, materials, and information, including documents that the Navy provided to its independent contractors.
- Upon commencement of defueling operations, the Navy must provide DOH with weekly status reports or briefings.
- Submit versions of all documents and material that can be released to the public.

[Click here to read the full Emergency Order.](#) DOH served the Navy with the Emergency Order this afternoon.

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