



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO
SAFE DRINKING WATER BRANCH
ULUAKUPU BUILDING 4
2385 WAIMANO HOME ROAD, SUITE 110
PEARL CITY, HI 96782-1400

In reply, please refer to:
File: SDWB

Lau64.docx

November 29, 2023

Mr. Ernest Y.W. Lau, P.E.
Manager and Chief Engineer
Board of Water Supply
City and County of Honolulu
630 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96843
[via Manager-SOH@hbws.org only]

SUBJECT: FUNDING AVAILABLE TO CONTINUE PROVIDING SAFE AND AFFORDABLE DRINKING WATER FOR THE PEOPLE OF HAWAII

Dear Mr. Lau:

The Honolulu Board of Water Supply (BWS) approved a rate increase over the next five years. We understand this may be a hardship for many residents as the cost of living keeps rising.

In looking for ways to keep costs down, the Hawaii Department of Health (DOH), in collaboration with the US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), have secured up to \$75 million through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) to address emerging contaminants (EC) and per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). A project is eligible for this funding if it addresses any contaminant that does not currently have a set Federal Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) and appears on any of the Drinking Water Contaminant Candidate List (CCL) 1 – 5. The BIL EC funds are provided through 2026 and are 100 percent grant or principal forgiveness. A non-exhaustive list of potential projects is listed below.

1. We understand BWS's decision to close its Halawa Shaft after the November 2021 fuel spill, out of an abundance of caution. If test results show that the water from the Halawa Shaft is not safe to drink, this money can be used for a treatment system to bring Halawa Shaft back online restoring 10 million gallons per day (MGD) to Metropolitan Honolulu.
2. Between 2006 – 2016, DOH disbursed \$12,096,983.25 to construct a Granular Activated Carbon (GAC) Treatment Facility with 24 GAC contactors for the Ewa Shaft source. It is our understanding that the facility was never brought online

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since its construction. BIL EC funds may be used to update the rusting Ewa Shaft treatment facility to address qualifying contaminants of concern at this source. This would add 13 MGD to Ewa and Metropolitan Honolulu communities.

3. There were PFAS detections in Kaamilo Wells, Waipahu Wells II, Makakilo Well, Waipio Heights Wells, Halawa Wells, and Moanalua Wells. USEPA will be releasing the final MCL for PFAS in the very near future. Some of these sources have existing GAC contactors and short chain PFAS compounds have passed through the treatment. BWS can use the BIL EC proactively to install or upgrade water treatment to remove a broad spectrum of PFAS compounds currently pending regulation and those that may be regulated in the future.

By bringing these precious water resources into BWS, an estimated 23 MGD can be added to meet present and future demands. We know that we can get more done when we work together. So, in that spirit, we will continue to work with BWS, EPA, and other partners to continue to provide safe and affordable drinking water to the people of Hawaii.

Sincerely,



GAUDENCIO C. LOPEZ, P.E., CHIEF
Safe Drinking Water Branch

JC:cw

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