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Lahaina Air Monitoring and Sampling Report Shows Good Air Quality

HONOLULU – The first Ambient Community Air Sampling Reports for Lahaina, issued by the Hawai'i Department of Health (DOH), confirm good ambient air quality for the period of January 13 to 24, 2024.

“The results provide the community with reassurance that debris removal activities have not significantly impacted ambient air quality,” said Deputy Director for Environmental Health Kathleen Ho. “Those involved in the recovery efforts have gone to great lengths to protect the health of everyone in the community and to restore the health of the surrounding environment. It’s encouraging to see those efforts paying off in terms of air quality.”

During the initial sampling period, air samples were collected from monitors at four locations:

- Lahaina Intermediate School
- Leialii Hawaiian Homelands
- Wastewater Pump Station #4
- Lahaina Boys & Girls Club

Samples were analyzed for PM 10 (particulate matter with a diameter of 0.01 millimeters or less), asbestos, and metals, including antimony, arsenic, barium, beryllium, cadmium, chromium, cobalt, copper, lead, manganese, molybdenum, nickel, selenium, thallium, vanadium, and zinc. Results from the two testing periods were as follows:

- Screening levels for PM 10 were not exceeded during the reporting period.
- All asbestos results were below the public health screening level of 0.0034 f/cc. There were no asbestos sample results above the laboratory’s detection limit, indicating asbestos fibers were not present in the sampled air.

- Some extremely low levels of heavy metals were detected, but all are below the public health screening levels indicating that the detections do not impact human health.

[Click here to view the laboratory report for January 13-17.](#)

[Click here to view the laboratory report for January 18-24.](#)

In addition, DOH and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency have installed 51 real-time air monitors in Lahaina and Olowalu. Data from these monitors are available at <https://fire.airnow.gov/>. These real-time monitors measure for PM 2.5, particulate matter that is 0.0025 millimeters and smaller in size (about 30 times smaller than the diameter of a human hair) that can be a component of ash, dust, smoke, and air pollution.

Contaminants of concern, such as metals like lead or arsenic, stick to pieces of ash and dust as small as PM 2.5. Because of this, air monitoring for PM 2.5 can be used as an indicator of the presence of contaminants. If PM 2.5 measurements are not above typical baseline levels, the air is not considered harmful. Elevated PM 2.5 readings can also be attributed to car exhaust, chimney smoke, outdoor cooking/smoking of food, and activities like yard work and wood chipping.

Following this news release, weekly reports on Lahaina air sampling will be posted at <https://health.hawaii.gov/mauiwildfires/environmental-hazard-concerns/>.

DOH will continue monitoring, sampling, and testing air quality in Lahaina and Olowalu throughout the debris removal work being performed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to ensure this work does not significantly impact air quality in the area.

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