



STATE OF HAWAI'I
KA MOKU 'ĀINA O HAWAI'I

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO

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**DOH ISSUES NOVO TO HAWAII AMERICAN WATER FOR DISCHARGING
EFFLUENT ABOVE PERMITTED LIMITS FROM EAST HONOLULU
WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 3, 2024

25-002

HONOLULU — The Hawai'i Department of Health (DOH) has issued a Notice of Violation and Order (NOVO) to Hawaii American Water, for discharging effluent in exceedance of National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit No. HI 0020303 limits from the East Honolulu Wastewater Treatment Plant (Facility) into the Pacific Ocean.

Between August 2022 and April 2024, Hawaii American Water discharged effluent from the facility in exceedance of NPDES permit limits for ammonia nitrogen on 14 occasions. The facility also failed to submit the required written noncompliance reports on two occasions. The NOVO requires Hawaii American Water to pay a penalty of \$47,750 and orders corrective actions to prevent future exceedances from occurring.

“Ammonia is derived from the breakdown of proteins and amino acids in wastewater. High concentrations of ammonia can have toxic effects on aquatic organisms and contributes to

excess nutrients in the water. As such, the discharge of ammonia above allowable limits into state waters is unacceptable,” stated Kathleen Ho, the deputy director for the Environmental Health Administration.

All persons, including business owners, government agencies and visitors must comply with environmental laws designed to protect Hawai'i. Failure to comply with water pollution laws may subject violators to monetary penalties of up to \$60,000 per day, per violation.

The DOH Clean Water Branch protects public health and the environment by prohibiting discharges which impair water quality, keeping Hawai'i's waters fishable and swimmable for everyone. Owners and operators of wastewater systems must comply with environmental regulations that are in place to protect the public and responds to pollution of state waters. Failure to do so results in legal action by the state, federal partners and/or private citizens.

To view the NOVO, visit [here](#).

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