

Honolulu Harbor Molasses Spill

(As of Friday, September 13, 2013, 4:30 p.m.)

Under the leadership of the Hawaii State Department of Health (DOH), State and Federal partners, Matson, and other supporting entities, continue to address the molasses spill reported on Sept. 9 near Pier 52 in Honolulu Harbor.

Since the incident took place, DOH and its partners have:

- conducted daily water sampling within Honolulu Harbor, Keehi Lagoon, and inland locations;
- collected dead fish for sampling at the Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR);
- posted warning signs to advise the public to stay out of the water and impacted area;
- and conducted visual aerial assessments by helicopter.

Water Samples

DOH Clean Water Branch is monitoring and collecting water samples daily at 14 locations, with ten locations in Honolulu Harbor and Keehi Lagoon, and four inland locations along Kapalama Stream and Moanalua Stream. A laboratory at the University of Hawaii is conducting bacteria and virus sampling for DOH. A map of all sampling locations is provided.

Fish Collection

DOH has been collecting dead fish from the affected area and providing them to DLNR for testing. The fish that are not being used for testing by DLNR are stored in bags and frozen for possible future evaluation.

Endangered Species

Endangered species have not been impacted by the molasses spill. All partners involved will continue to monitor for endangered species in the area.

Posting of Warning Signs

DOH continues to advise the public to stay out of the water and away from shores in Honolulu Harbor and Keehi Lagoon for safety reasons and to ensure that response teams are able to conduct the necessary assessments and sampling. The public is also advised not to collect or consume fish in the area.

Aerial Assessments

The DOH Hazard Evaluation and Emergency Response Office is conducting daily aerial assessments by helicopter to observe the impact of the spill as the tides wash in and out of Honolulu Harbor and Keehi Lagoon. Weather permitting, aerial assessments will continue on a daily basis.

New Updates

Friday, September 13, 2013 (as of 4:30 p.m.)

Aerial Assessments

- While certain areas in the Honolulu Harbor remain dark in color, the color of the water overall is less brown and regaining its more natural green color as it flows from the Honolulu Harbor into Keehi Lagoon, and then dissipates into the ocean.

Water Samples

- Water sampling is ongoing and laboratory analysis is currently underway.

Fish Collection

- Approximately 4,000 dead fish have been collected to date.
- The daily count of dead fish observed and collected has been decreasing.

Endangered Species

- No endangered species have been impacted.

Posting of Warning Signs

- Warning signs have already been posted along the Kapalama Canal and Keehi Lagoon.
- More warning signs will be posted today along Lagoon Drive.

Other Updates

- *Federal Partnerships* – Federal partners involved include the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Today, additional Federal partnerships have been gained from the U.S. Coast Guard and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). EPA staff from Region 9 in San Francisco will arrive in Honolulu this afternoon to assist with on-the-ground the efforts.
- *Coral Assessment* – This morning a multi-agency dive team headed by DLNR was created, and a dive will take place this afternoon to assess possible impact on coral life and the density and dispersion of the spill.

DOH and its partners will continue in its coordinated efforts and to provide updates at the HEER website.