



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

News Release

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**BROWN WATER ADVISORY FOR ALL ISLANDS FOLLOWING
HEAVY RAINS**

HONOLULU – The Hawai`i State Department of Health (DOH) advises the public to stay out of streams and coastal waters that have turned murky or brown by storm waters. These waters and flooded areas may contain chemical pollutants or harmful micro-organisms (pathogens) from overflowing cesspools or septic tanks as well as animal feces washed into storm drains.

The DOH and affected counties will post warning signs by waters known to have been contaminated by sewage spills, but people should be careful about going into brown, murky, storm or standing water, even if no signs are present.

Direct contact with contaminated water may sicken or infect people, particularly if they swallow it or get it in their mouths, eyes, noses, cuts or scrapes. If people cannot avoid contact with affected waters, they should protect themselves by wearing rubber boots and gloves and other forms of protective clothing; by keeping cuts and scrapes dry and protected; by rinsing off as soon as possible; and by cleansing their skin with soap and lots of clean water.

If people become sick or infected, they should check with a healthcare provider to be evaluated for exposure to contaminated water. The public is advised to stay out of coastal waters impacted by storm water (brown water) runoff for several days until conditions clear.

For more information or current water warnings on each island, log on to DOH homepage at www.hawaii.gov/health and click on Contaminated Water Postings.

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