



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

News Release

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DOH INVESTIGATING MEDICAL NEEDLES FOUND IN EWA BEACH

HONOLULU -- The Hawai'i State Department of Health (DOH) is advising the public to beware of medical needles found on beaches in the Ewa Beach area. On March 5, 2008, the DOH was notified of medical needles washing up on Ewa beaches and on March 5 and 6 joint surveys and a clean-up were conducted with City & County road crews and a crew from PENCO, a DOH environmental contractor. The U.S. Coast Guard conducted their on investigation on March 7. Teams from the DOH, City & County and U.S. Coast Guard conducted a complete sweep of the area on March 7, and determined the area to be clear of needles and medical waste. All medical needles found earlier were properly disposed of by PENCO.

Today, DOH received another report of needles being found again on a beach in Ewa. A PENCO crew was sent out today to investigate and conduct a clean-up.

The DOH is advising that anyone finding syringes on the beach to properly dispose of them by placing them in an empty sturdy plastic container (such as empty bleach, laundry detergent or dish soap containers) and wrapping the container in packaging for disposal with their household waste. The container should have a small opening so that no one else is able to stick their hand into it.

Anyone who is wounded by a needle or any other object on or in the ground should thoroughly clean the wound, apply medicine and cover the wound with a clean bandage. See a doctor immediately if there is any sign of infection.

Illegal disposal of medical needles is subject to a fine of \$1,000 for each offense. To report illegal disposal of medical needles, call the DOH at 586-4249.

(more)

The public may call the City Roads Division crews at 455-1725 or after hours at 911 for pick up and disposal of any additional needles found on the beach.

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