



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

News Release

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GOVERNOR

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**INTERAGENCY HAZARDOUS MATERIALS DRILL
TESTS EMERGENCY RESPONSE CAPABILITIES**

HONOLULU – The Hawai'i State Department of Health (DOH) Hazard Evaluation and Emergency Response (HEER) office, Honolulu Fire Department (HFD) and the Hawai'i National Guard 93rd Civil Support Team (CST) will be conducting a hazardous materials drill on Thursday, October 29, 2009 from 6:00 – 9:00 p.m.

The drill will provide simulated emergency conditions for fire, public health and National Guard personnel to practice complex response operations. Teams will don fully encapsulated chemical suits to perform tasks that would be involved in responding to a hazardous material release. As part of this drill, emergency vehicles will be in place in the vicinity of the DOH office building at 919 Ala Moana Boulevard. There is no risk or threat to the public.

"It is important to maintain emergency response skills and teamwork, despite budget pressures. These regularly scheduled drills provide hands-on experience for hazardous materials specialists from many agencies to maintain their high level skills," said Laurence Lau, Deputy Director for Environmental Health. "The drills also promote teamwork through on-site, real-time communication and collaboration among state, county, and federal responders."

The DOH HEER office protects human health, public welfare, and the environment by working with state, county and federal agencies to enforce environmental laws relating to releases or threats of releases of hazardous substances, pollutants or contaminants.

The Hawai'i National Guard's civil support team supports local and state authorities by identifying potentially hazardous agents and substances, assessing consequences, advising on response measures and assisting with requests for additional military support.

The Honolulu Fire Department's hazardous materials response teams responds to hazardous materials incidents on O'ahu and assists in the investigation of environmental crimes.

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