



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

**News Release**

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GOVERNOR

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**DOH INVESTIGATES IMPROPER USE OF NON-FOOD GRADE  
CRUDE TYPE SALT**

HONOLULU – During a routine inspection of a local food manufacturer, the Hawai'i State Department of Health's (DOH) Food and Drug Branch discovered the improper use of non-food grade crude type/rock salt as a direct food additive and ingredient. After further investigation, the DOH found widespread use of unlabelled non-food grade salt among local restaurants and food manufacturing businesses statewide.

"At this time, the DOH has no evidence of any health effects from the use and consumption of non-food grade salt due to possible contaminants," said Laurence Lau, DOH Deputy Director for Environmental Health. "The Department is not aware of any illness related to the misuse of the product. However, we have notified distributors, food manufacturers, food establishments and affected businesses, and DOH inspectors are checking facilities to visually confirm compliance with state requirements. Only food grade salt should be used locally in food."

State law requires non-food grade crude type salt or "rock salt" to be clearly labeled on the outside of packaging and stored away from food products and food preparation areas. The DOH is working directly with the food distributors and food service operators, to properly label the product, and discontinue its use in food products.

The DOH is still determining which locally-made food products may have been affected. At this time, the public is advised to discontinue use of products if they are concerned about health risks.

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