

From the Ho'okele newspaper archives: (11/27/15) McGinn tours Red Hill Fuel Facility during visit to Hawaii (pg. A-2) - <https://www.dvidshub.net/publication/issues/64133>

McGinn tours Red Hill Fuel Facility during visit to Hawaii

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Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Energy, Installations and Environment Dennis McGinn toured the Red Hill Bulk Fuel Facility, Nov. 17, during his visit to military installations in Hawaii.

Red Hill is a national strategic asset that supports military operations in the Pacific. The operational facility includes 20 large underground fuel storage tanks. The tanks are constructed of steel, encased in concrete, and surrounded and supported by basalt bedrock.

“My purpose is to visit installations in Hawaii,” said McGinn. “I am here to see how our installations are working, to check on their infrastructure and utilities, and also to talk about how we are going to meet our critical mission of being good stewards of the environment here in Hawaii.”

During his tour, McGinn asked questions and listened to briefs by both military and civilian subject matter experts.

“I have a tremendous amount of confidence, primarily in the people we have on the teams who are working on installations,” McGinn said.

He stressed the importance of continuing efforts to raise a margin of environmental safety at the Red Hill facility by ongoing testing of water to ensure it is safe to drink.

“We are good neighbors,” said McGinn. “We value our communities and, at the same time, we fulfill our national security mission. On top of that, we are taking good care of the environment.”

McGinn talked about the significance of using latest environmental technology, renewable energy and energy efficiency. He said the Navy is looking for good, strong partners across the government, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and companies in the private sector within communities.

“The environmental progress that we continue to make is really tremendous,” said McGinn.

Rear Adm. John Fuller, commander of Navy Region Hawaii and Naval Surface Group Middle Pacific, hosted the visit to the Red Hill Fuel Facility. “We have increased our vigilance and

response capabilities. My environmental professionals continue their long-term effort to monitor groundwater and drinking water sources and to provide the results to regulatory agencies for evaluation and assessment. The results indicate that the drinking water remains safe for all users,” Fuller said.

He was joined on the tour by several subject matter experts including Capt. Dean Tufts, commanding officer of Naval Facilities Engineering Command Hawaii, and Capt. Ken Epps, commanding officer of Naval Supply Fleet Logistics Center Pearl Harbor.

“Assistant Secretary of the Navy McGinn is the leading advocate in the department of the Navy for all things environmental and he is a very powerful voice in D.C.,” Epps said.

“We want to ensure he has the latest up-to-date information about Red Hill, so he can educate and advocate on our behalf.”

Epps explained the reason behind the latest tours and engagements with community leaders and media.

“We want to be as transparent as possible with the community and to those who care about the Red Hill facility,” Epps said.

“We educate as many people as possible about safety and operations at Red Hill. We keep the public informed on how efficient Red Hill is and all the environmental protections that we have in place to make sure that we can prevent, to the greatest extent possible, any future incidents associated with Red Hill,” Epps said.