

2023 ACO FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Quarter 1 (January - March) 2026

1. Q: What regulatory agencies are responsible for overseeing the drinking water system at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam?

A. The Hawaii Department of Health oversees the drinking water regulations in the state, and the Environmental Protection Agency oversees the 2023 Administrative Consent Order (ACO) requirements.

2. Q: Have any upgrades been made to the Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility to prevent contaminants from entering the aquifer?

A. Substantial repairs were made to the Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility before the successful completion of large-scale gravity defueling in 2024, and extensive monitoring has shown **zero evidence** of JP-5 migration in the groundwater around Red Hill. The Navy continues to gather data from site assessments of the area which will inform future environmental remediation in and around the facility including the expansion of its groundwater monitoring well network and soil vapor monitoring efforts. More information on environmental remediation actions can be seen in this [video](#).

3. Q: What temporary and permanent water treatment systems are planned at Navy-Aiea Halawa Shaft (NAHS) and Red Hill Shaft (RHS), and for which contaminants are they treating?

A: The reactivation of both the NAHS and the RHS are essential to restoring resiliency of the Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam (JBPHH) drinking water system, and plans have been progressing in deliberate and close coordination with the regulators since 2022. The treatment systems for both the NAHS and Red Hill Shaft will have the capability to treat for many contaminants including PFAS and JP-5.

NAHS: The Navy stopped pumping from the Navy Aiea-Halawa Shaft (NAHS) on Dec. 3, 2021, as a precautionary measure after the November 2021 Red Hill fuel release. Since that time, the Navy has continued to monitor the shaft, and the sample results demonstrate it was not affected by the release. In preparation for the NAHS reactivation, the Navy installed a granular activated carbon (GAC) system for the NAHS that will address per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) well ahead of the enforcement time for new PFAS standards set by the EPA in its National Primary Drinking Water Regulation. The presence of PFAS in the environment is a national issue due to its wide-spread use in many industrial and consumer products.

RHS: The Red Hill Shaft was physically disconnected from the Navy's water distribution system December 2021. This well was impacted by the November 2021 release, and the Navy has worked closely with regulators on methods to create a capture zone, treat contaminated water through a GAC treatment system, and discharge the treated water into the Halawa Stream. The Navy is working on a separate military construction project at Red Hill to build a water treatment facility that will support the JBPHH drinking water system.

4. Q: Regarding the water system that was split into 19 zones, how was each zone isolated while still being supplied by a single source?

A. In December 2021, a team of experts called the Interagency Drinking Water System Team (IDWST) was created from the DOH, EPA, Navy, and Army to develop requirements to restore the JBPHH drinking water system. In accordance with the IDWST requirements, the Navy conducted a systematic flushing of the system by zones, working from the source ensuring an upstream to downstream flow of the JBPHH drinking water distribution system to include all facility and residences on the system. This top-down hydraulic flushing method was utilized and included flushing each zone with three times the total water volume to ensure thorough cleaning. DOH confirmed the drinking water was safe in March 2022.

5. Q: Why was the Community Representation Initiative (CRI) removed from the Navy's Community Engagement Plan (CEP)?

A. NCTF-RH's goal through the 2026 CEP is to enhance public interest and deliver information to the widest possible audience by focusing on platforms that have been proven to be the most effective and productive. Our focus includes information booths at high-traffic locations such as base exchanges and community markets in areas served by the drinking water system. This allows for one-on-one, informal conversations, which have been highly effective for addressing specific questions. This is a positive step forward in working toward our goal of rebuilding community trust. NCTF-RH remains committed to transparency and the safe, deliberate decommissioning of the Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility.