

## **Navy investigates fuel leak in Red Hill tank**

### **Navy Region Hawaii Public Affairs**

The Navy, in close coordination with the Hawaii State Department of Health and other agencies, is investigating a fuel leak from one tank at the Red Hill Underground Fuel Storage Facility.

“On Monday our fuel operators at Red Hill noticed a discrepancy in the fuel level in one of the tanks, specifically tank number 5. This tank stores JP-8 aviation fuel,” according to Capt. Mark Wheeler, the commanding officer of the Fleet Logistics Center Pearl Harbor, which includes the fuels facility at Red Hill.

“We have safeguards in place to detect something like this and they worked, which allowed us to quickly address this issue. We responded immediately by simultaneously moving the fuel out of tank 5 to another tank while notifying local and federal agencies,” he explained.

Navy experts conducted a physical inspection of the tank and took samples. The samples matched, indicating that a leak had occurred from tank 5.

“The Navy is taking every prudent measure to ensure public safety,” Wheeler said. Samples of ground water and drinking water in the vicinity have been collected and are being tested. State, city and federal agencies were promptly notified and are working with the Navy to closely assess and monitor for any environmental or public health impacts.

“Through daily operations and continuously monitoring, I am here to tell you that our water is safe to drink,” said Capt. Mike Williamson, regional engineer for Commander Navy Region Hawaii and the commanding officer of Naval Facilities Engineering Command, Hawaii.

The Honolulu Board of Water Supply (HBWS) was among those notified and is doing its own separate monitoring and investigation. Wells in the vicinity have been shut down as a precautionary measure.

“One of my responsibilities is to oversee the daily operations of five potable water systems on the island of Oahu which provides 18-20 million gallons of water today to over 50,000 active duty military, civilians and family members,” Williamson noted.

For Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam water system users, there will be no reduction to the water supply.

Williamson and Wheeler spoke at a press conference held yesterday afternoon at the Clean Islands Council, Hawaii Oil Spill Response Center at Sand Island, near JBPHH.

“We take our environmental stewardship seriously. Our military personnel and families live here and drink the water, too,” Wheeler said.

“We take great pride in being part of the Hawaii community and we will continue to keep the public informed. We will continue to work closely with our city, state and federal agency partners to assess, monitor and take every prudent action needed to protect public safety,” he concluded.

Navy Region Hawaii will continue to provide updated information via social media, in the Ho'okele and directly to the community.