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Navy begins visual inspection of Tank 5

By Navy Region Hawai'i Public Affairs

PEARL HARBOR -- Navy contractors began visual inspections today in Tank 5 at the Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility.

The visual inspections are part of the process to determine what may have caused a drop in levels at the tank that were reported on Jan. 13. Calculations of those changes in level indicate that a release of up to 27,000 gallons may have occurred.

The visual inspection work is on schedule following preparations to vent the tank and install proper lighting, scaffolding and other safety requirements. The visual inspection is expected to continue for at least several weeks. No initial findings are available at this time.

The Navy also provided their Initial Release Response Report to the State Department of Health today, on schedule as required within 90 days.

“Both the inspection of the tank and our report to DOH are within the timelines we have committed to,” said Captain Mike Williamson, commanding officer of Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) Hawaii and regional engineer for Commander, Navy Region Hawaii. “And all drinking water samples continue to be in compliance with all State and Federal regulations,” he added.

“We are wholly committed to protecting the environment and our vital fresh water sources,” Williamson said. “I believe we have taken prudent measures to ensure the water remains safe to drink and we look forward to continue working collaboratively with all stakeholders to ensure public safety while maintaining this critical national strategic asset.”

The Red Hill fuels facility is a national strategic asset and continues to provide vital, secure fuel storage for ships and aircraft of U.S. Pacific Fleet and other military branches.

The Navy is working with the State Department of Health and the City & County of Honolulu Board of Water Supply to maintain an open dialogue to ensure the safety of drinking water.