



JOINT BASE WATER UPDATE

Joint Information Center

(808) 471-5013

www.navy.mil/jointbasewater

[4/12/2022]

00:00:09 - 00:02:14

CAPT. DARREN GUENTHER

Hello, everyone, and welcome to the water update for April the 12. I'm Captain Darren Guenther, Chief of Staff for Navy Region Hawaii. Over three and a half months ago, we started these updates. The first one was on December the 21st. We first talked about the flushing that was going on in your neighborhoods. Then we moved on to the testing going on in your neighborhoods. And finally, we talked about the Hawaii Department of Health's certification and the water in each of your neighborhoods as safe to drink, and safe for all uses. The water crisis that we've gone through has affected all of you in different ways. Some of you were removed from your homes, and some of you switched to bottled water. I want to say thank you for your patience. And thank you for your perseverance throughout this time. But we're not finished yet. And there's still lots of work to be done. We're focused right now on our long-term monitoring and testing programs to ensure the continued safety of your water. We're also focused on the payment of benefits and claims. And I'm going to draw your attention to the filing of those benefits in claims. We have lots of extra help here on the island, as well as from afar in processing those claims. And so I'm going to ask you to file those claims so we can have those extra people work on those claims and benefits for you. Today we're going to talk about claims and benefits with Lt. Cmdr. Jesse Galvez. As you might recall, he's our Navy Region, Hawaii Administrative Officer. He'll be here to answer some questions, and talk about benefits and claims. But first, let's go to the map and give you a map update on where we're at.

00:02:14 - 00:03:48

CAPT. DARREN GUENTHER

So this map is shown on two of our websites. The first is our water resources website that has all the information on support that's available to you. And in the upper right hand corner of that website, you'll see the link to this map that you can click on. Now that takes you to the other place where you can find this map is our water data map, you can go to that map and pull this down. So you can see that all of our neighborhoods remain green as with the water certified by the Hawaii Department of Health as safe to drink and safe for all uses. So you'll recall that it was about a month and a half ago that our first neighborhood had their advisory on their water amended by the Hawaii Department of Health that was 14th of February. That was for the Red Hill neighborhood. That was our very first shortly thereafter, Pearl City Peninsula was certified and then we sort of went across the spectrum of our Navy drinking water distribution system. So we had Halawa Housing certified, McGrew Point, Camp Smith, we had three zones in our Aliamanu neighborhood that were certified. We had our Makalapa neighborhood certified, Sub Base. We had D1, what we call D1 which is Hokulani and Hole Moku.

00:03:48 - 00:07:24

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We had Moanalua Terrace and NEX certified and then sort of March 11. About halfway through we had the big eastern housing neighborhoods certified that included Halsey Terrace, Radford Terrace, Doris Miller, Maloelap and one other Catlin Park. That's the other one, Hickam, we had a lot of neighborhoods certified through Hickam over this period Onizuka Housing, Hale Na Koa, as well as Officer Field. We had Hickam Beach certified and our Iroquois Point area with some of the private homes out there, their water was certified. And then finally our last neighborhood was that big Hickam neighborhood, we call it zone D3, that's Earhart. That health advisory was amended on 18 March by the Hawaii Department of Health, which was our final zone where the department declared the water is safe to drink and safe for all uses across our zone. Now in the opener, I talked about sort of our shift in focus, we're shifting towards looking at our long term monitoring and testing program to ensure the continued safety of that water. Now that we are one month into that, and as I mentioned last week, we've completed the first month testing for all residential homes on the water system. We also have all of the facilities that we're testing, we've got three more facilities within, actually, the shipyard Zone C3 here to complete. And we'll send those in. And that includes across the month, the first month of testing over 800, full drinking water samples that represents 5% of all of our residential homes, and 5% of all our facilities on the Navy water system, it also includes each and every one of our CDCs and schools where our kids attend. So those are tested at every round of our long term monitoring. So they were also tested in this first month. And they'll be tested in month two as well. In fact, we've just started month two testing, although we're complete in just the last few facilities in month one, once those tests and samples are taken, they're sent off to the same labs that we've used throughout this process on the mainland, those labs are all certified by the Hawaii Department of Health, and the Environmental Protection Agency, a lot of the results that we've sent off for our first month of long term monitoring are still at those labs, though, they're taking a look at that all 800 tests. And so we're still waiting for some of those results. To come back. When we get a batch of results back for a zone, we take those and we put them into our interagency drinking water team. And then we share them with the Hawaii Department of Health to ensure that they're validated, verified, and we have the right way forward with anything there. And then what we'll be doing is uploading them to the same data web page. That's the safe waters web page, where you'll be able to take a look at those results for yourself. As you recall, there are hundreds of documents on each of those, we should see those start to get uploaded here shortly for the first month of long term monitoring.

00:07:24 - 00:08:01

CAPT. DARREN GUENTHER

So that's your update, your map update for today. We'd like to do now is shift focus to our claims and benefits. So as I mentioned, it's not only the long term testing and monitoring that we're looking at and working. We're also looking at claims and benefits and looking to start working those payments and accelerate the closure of them. And so I'm joined by Lieutenant Commander Jesse Galvez, Jesse, thanks for joining us.



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00:08:01 - 00:08:02

LT CMDR JESSE GALVEZ

Thanks for having me again sir.

00:08:02 - 00:08:15

CAPT. DARREN GUENTHER

So what I'd first like to ask is. Could you go over the claims process for the various individuals in groups out there for Navy for Army and for our civilian community members?

00:08:15 - 00:09:25

LT CMDR JESSE GALVEZ

Absolutely, sir. So for the Navy side, we ask that folks submit claims through their CPPA, that stands for Command Pay and Personnel Advisor. That is a direct link between the command and RSC, Regional Support Center, where they're following up processing claims for reimbursement. And folks can go to their CPPAs if they don't have a CPPA readily available, whether that person is on leave, or if the command happens to be underway, they can go directly to RSC where they have customer service hours, seven days a week where they can get assistance provided. For the Air Force members that's through the 15th Comptroller Wing and they're set up at the Hickam Theater sir, and folks can go over there in person to file claims directly with the 15 Comptroller Squadron. And then finally, for the civilians, we're asking that folks submit claims via the DocuSign process, and that's all online or over the phone, however they feel comfortable. They can also set up in person meetings with our staff if they have more of a complex claim that they'd like to sit down with somebody. But that information is available on the Joint Base Water Resource website to how to get the DocuSign process started, sir.

00:09:25 - 00:09:51

CAPT. DARREN GUENTHER

Okay, good. So information on that water resources website. Always an important one thing to keep in mind. Or if you have questions. Let me ask you about one of the funds that's being used. They're called emergency or extraordinary expenses. Sometimes I hear the staff refer to them as Triple E. Can you explain about those funds where that funding comes from in some details there?

00:09:51 - 00:10:36

LT CMDR JESSE GALVEZ

Yes, sir. So Triple E funds were made available by Congress for the Department of Defense to use in circumstances like this. Secretary of the Navy is allowed or authorized the Navy to utilize it in response to the Red Hill water crisis. And we've been utilizing those funds to file claims for civilians, retirees, non affiliated civilians, GS civilians. So as more funds have become available



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by Congress, and recently, we've had more funds become available. We utilize those funds to reimburse after they submit their claims, sir. So now we have funds to continue to reimburse, and also for sustainment you know, throughout this whole process, if we get more claims. In the future, we'll have those funds available to pay, folks.

00:10:36 - 00:10:57

CAPT. DARREN GUENTHER

Okay, so this type of fund, it's a special type of fund and it comes with sort of a process. That is, goes through Washington D.C., and those funds have just recently been made available for us and how is that affected sort of reimbursement timelines going through that process?

00:10:57 - 00:11:14

LT CMDR JESSE GALVEZ

So it's delayed them a little bit, Sir, we've continued to process them in house, we were just, you know, as we've waited for those funds to become available, that's what we wait for to release the funds. So but it hasn't slowed down our process in house processing, here at Region.

00:11:14 - 00:11:26

CAPT. DARREN GUENTHER

Okay, so we've been processing them. So if they haven't been paid out, it sounds like though that may accelerate, and we may see some of our residents may see those payouts increasing.

00:11:26 - 00:11:27

LT CMDR JESSE GALVEZ

Correct. Yes, sir.

00:11:27 - 00:11:36

CAPT. DARREN GUENTHER

Okay. Can you explain the work that goes into processing a claim? You said, we've been continuing to work on that process? What is the work that goes into processing these claims?

00:11:36 - 00:12:24

LT CMDR JESSE GALVEZ

Yes, sir. So we have some great financial analysts here at Region who are processing those claims. And what they're doing is they're collecting all the data, all the information from the member. And then they're working with banking and financial institutions. To get that information over the Defense Finance and Accounting Service, or we call them DFAS. Once DFAS has established an account for the member, they review that information with the IRS to make sure that everything is accurate. And provided that there's no errors or any reason to contact the member for, you know, some type of administrative oversight. That's how we process the claim.



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So it takes a little bit longer just because generally, if it's a civilian, they may not have, DFAS may not have a way to pay the member. So it takes a little bit longer to establish that account.

00:12:24 - 00:12:38

CAPT. DARREN GUENTHER

Okay, what're some of the hiccups that we've seen that might cause delays? In other words, is there something that our community can really pay attention to in filing these claims in order to help expedite that process?

00:12:38 - 00:13:02

LT CMDR JESSE GALVEZ

Yes, sir. So missing or inaccurate information can cause some delays. If there's any inconsistencies between what the members submitting, and the receipts or the lease that's being provided, our financial analysts will reach back to the member to try to collect that information. And if there's any delay in the member returning the call or responding with that information, it could cause another delay there, too.

00:13:02 - 00:13:16

CAPT. DARREN GUENTHER

Okay. I talked about earlier in the opening, asking people to file soon and preferably now. Why is it so important that we have folks process these claims now?

00:13:16 - 00:13:40

LT CMDR JESSE GALVEZ

Well sir just like you mentioned, we have some folks here who are specifically assigned to help with working these claims. But as time goes on, and we receive less claims that support won't be here any longer. So we'll still have folks in house that will process claims, but we have additional support now that can help with processing and reaching back if we need to. But like I said, they won't be here forever.

00:13:40 - 00:13:42

CAPT. DARREN GUENTHER

Okay, so a little extra help. Hopefully, it'll go faster.

00:13:42 - 00:13:42

LT CMDR JESSE GALVEZ

Correct.

00:13:43 - 00:13:47

CAPT. DARREN GUENTHER

And so certainly in our communities benefit to put in sooner than later.



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LT CMDR JESSE GALVEZ

Yes, sir.

00:13:48 - 00:13:52

CAPT. DARREN GUENTHER

And finally, where can residents go when they do have that question that they need answered?

00:13:52 - 00:14:24

LT CMDR JESSE GALVEZ

Yes, sir. So, Joint Base water resource website is your best resource. It has all the contact information for the RSC, the Navy former PSD, that's where Navy folks can go to get their information for their TLA claims. The Air Force 15 Comptroller Squadrons, contact information is there and also our resident call center is there as well. So folks want to email or call the resident call center to find out about their civilian claims they can contact, they can reach the contact information on that website.

00:14:24 - 00:14:49

CAPT. DARREN GUENTHER

Okay, great. So Water Resources website has the contact information for each of these folks who are in the various sort of categories to help them through that process. If they want to pull it off the website. There may be some information there on how they do things. But additionally, if they want to pick up the phone and talk to someone who is, I'm sure many of them may want to do the contact numbers around that website for them to reach out to someone.

00:14:49 - 00:14:50

LT CMDR JESSE GALVEZ

Correct. Yes, sir.

00:14:50 - 00:14:56

CAPT. DARREN GUENTHER

Okay, Jesse, thanks. I really appreciate your continued support for our community members throughout this.

00:14:56 - 00:14:57

LT CMDR JESSE GALVEZ

Thanks for having me, sir. Appreciate it.



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CAPT. DARREN GUENTHER

Thank you. Okay, that was your water update for today. Please join us Thursday, same time.

We're monitoring your questions and on Facebook you can also email those questions to CNRHPAO@gmail.com. Don't forget to check out our water info website. That's our resources website that we just talked about, it's at navy.mil/jointbasewater. And you can also check out the latest water data. We're going to be uploading those test results for the long term monitoring here shortly at JBPHH-safewaters.org and make sure to check out the good stuff at greatlifehawaii.com/wegotyou. Please remember, we're all in this together as one community and ohana. Stay safe. Take care of yourself. Take care of each other, and we'll see you next time.