



DEPARTMENT OF WATER SUPPLY • COUNTY OF HAWAII

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Drinking Water Preparedness for Public Safety Power Shutoffs

The National Weather Service (NWS) has issued a Red Flag Warning for the State of Hawai'i until 6 p.m. today. Hawaiian Electric (HECO) issued a statement today indicating they will be monitoring weather conditions and **MAY** implement its Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) program to proactively shut off power in communities with high exposure to wildfire risks.

The Department of Water Supply (DWS) relies on HECO power to operate our wells and booster pumps to distribute water to our own customers. Our understanding is that a PSPS power outage could last hours to days, depending on weather conditions, location and extent of damage. An extended power outage could diminish or deplete portions of DWS' water systems and leave customers with low pressure or no water. If Hawaiian Electric implements a PSPS, DWS will likely need to restrict, or ration potable water for fire protection, drinking, cooking, and personal hygiene purposes only. Car washing, irrigation, and non-essential uses of water would need to be suspended until all power and water systems have been returned to normal conditions. DWS uses backup generators at a limited number of well sites, but these emergency generators CANNOT fully replicate HECO's power grid.

Therefore, DWS strongly urges its customers and those who depend on a continuous supply of DWS water to review their personal situations and prepare accordingly. Customers should have alternate sources of potable water and enough supply to meet their essential needs during a prolonged power outage that disrupts DWS service. Ways to safely store drinking water are listed in the Water Emergency Preparedness guide available online under the "Community" drop-down menu option on the Department's website, www.hawaiiidws.org.

An immediate voluntary Water Conservation is in effect for all customers in areas that may be affected by a possible PSPS. These customers are asked to voluntarily reduce their water usage by 10% to afford DWS the opportunity to adjust our systems and resources in preparation for fire protection.

Future water messages regarding this Red Flag Warning and its potential impact on DWS water customers will be issued by either DWS or the Hawai'i County Civil Defense Agency.

To reach the DWS, please call (808) 961-8050 during normal business hours, (808) 961-8790 for after-hour emergencies, or email: dws@hawaiiidws.org.

This is your Hawai'i County Department of Water Supply.

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