



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

OFFICE OF
INSPECTOR GENERAL

March 21, 2022

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Notification of Evaluation:
EPA Oversight of Drinking Water Contamination at Red Hill, Hawaii
Project No. OSRE-FY22-0075

FROM: Laretta Joseph, Director
Programs, Offices, and Centers Oversight Directorate
Office of Special Review and Evaluation

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Laretta", is positioned to the right of the "FROM:" line.

TO: Martha Guzman, Regional Administrator
Region 9

The Office of Inspector General for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency plans to begin an evaluation to review drinking water contamination reported at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam on the island of Oahu, Hawaii. This evaluation, which follows an [OIG inquiry](#), addresses the following fiscal year 2022 [top management challenge](#) for the Agency: enforcing environmental laws and regulations.

Our objective is to determine, by analyzing the sequence of events that led to drinking water contamination at the Red Hill site on Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, whether the EPA's oversight of relevant authorized state programs effectively has addressed the potential for contamination at the site. We plan to conduct work in EPA Region 9, including a site visit to Oahu. We may also contact staff in the EPA's Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance, Office of Land and Emergency Management, and Office of Water. The evaluation will be conducted using *Quality Standards for Inspection and Evaluation*, issued by the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency. The anticipated benefits of this evaluation include improving drinking water monitoring and communication mechanisms to protect human health and the environment.

We will contact you to arrange a mutually agreeable time to discuss our objectives. We would also be particularly interested in any areas of concern that you may have. We will answer any of your questions about the evaluation process, reporting procedures, methods used to gather and analyze data, and what we should expect of each other during the evaluation. Throughout the evaluation, we will provide updates on a regular basis.

We respectfully note that the OIG is authorized by the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended, to have timely access to personnel and all materials necessary to complete its objectives. Similarly, EPA Manual 6500, *Functions and Activities of the Office of Inspector General* (1994), requires that each EPA employee cooperate with and fully disclose information to the OIG. Also, Administrator Michael S. Regan, in an April 28, 2021 email message to EPA employees, conveyed his "expectation that EPA personnel provide OIG timely access to records or other information" and observed that "full cooperation with the OIG is in

the best interest of the public we serve.” We will request that you immediately resolve the situation if an Agency employee or contractor refuses to provide requested materials to the OIG or otherwise fails to cooperate with the OIG. We may report unresolved access matters to the administrator and include the incident in the *Semiannual Report to Congress*.

We will post this memorandum on our public website at www.epa.gov/oig.

cc: Janet McCabe, Deputy Administrator

Dan Utech, Chief of Staff, Office of the Administrator

Jon Monger, Associate Deputy Administrator

Wesley J. Carpenter, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the Administrator

Deborah Jordan, Deputy Administrator for Region 9

Mendy Guan, Audit Follow-Up Coordinator, Region 9

Lawrence Starfield, Acting Assistant Administrator for Enforcement and Compliance Assurance

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Lindsay Hamilton, Associate Administrator for Public Affairs

Lance McCluney, Director, Office of Administrative and Executive Services, Office of the Administrator

Regional Audit Follow-Up Coordinators, Regions 1–10

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