



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

News Release

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**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH REMOVES SEWAGE WARNINGS FROM
ALA WAI CANAL, ALA WAI HARBOR, AND ALA MOANA BOWLS SURF SPOT**

PUTS UP NEW SIGNS AT ALA WAI CANAL AND ALA WAI HARBOR

HONOLULU – The Hawaii State Department of Health is removing sewage warning signs fronting the Ala Wai Canal, Ala Wai Yacht Harbor and Ala Moana Bowls surf spot today. Sewage warning signs are also being removed from the Ala Moana canoe launch ramp and the Magic Island Finger.

The decision to remove the sewage warnings was based on evaluation of results from recent water samples. The Department of Health Clean Water Branch has determined the bacteria levels in the water are no longer related to sewage. The DOH is not declaring the water in the Ala Wai Canal and the Ala Wai Yacht Harbor as safe, but notes that counts of enterococci bacteria have returned to levels prior to the sewage spill on March 24, 2006.

The DOH and the City will be posting new caution signs along the Ala Wai Canal and at the Ala Wai Yacht Harbor urging people not to swim or fish in the area.

Enterococci bacteria are used as indicator bacteria of human sewage because human sewage contains it, and the Department cannot feasibly test for all the human viruses and pathogens in sewage. Enterococci is used by the EPA to determine if the water is safe or not. The use of enterococcus is more complicated in tropical waters such as Hawaii's because there are other non-sewage sources of enterococcus. The Department thus considers other factors in addition to enterococcus tests.

For information on current water warnings across the state, log on to the DOH homepage at www.hawaii.gov/health and click on Contaminated Water Warnings.

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