



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

News Release

LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR

CHIYOME LEINAALA FUKINO, M.D.
DIRECTOR
Phone: (808) 586-4410
Fax: (808) 586-4444

For Immediate Release: December 29, 2006

06-84

**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO MONITOR
NEW YEAR'S AIR QUALITY**

Public advised to prepare for a smoke-filled New Year's Eve

HONOLULU - The Hawaii State Department of Health's Clean Air Branch will be monitoring Hawaii's air quality during New Year's and comparing it with national ambient air quality standards. The heavy use of fireworks during the annual holiday celebration can significantly increase the amount of particulates in the air especially on Oahu.

Last year, the Clean Air Branch reported lower levels of smoke in Hawaii's atmosphere during the New Year's firework celebration. We are hoping for more cooperative weather this year and are encouraging the public to be properly informed and prepared.

Firework smoke consists primarily of particulate matter that can aggravate conditions such as asthma, emphysema, and chronic bronchitis. If you suffer from one of these lung conditions, you may want to take certain precautionary measures. The Department of Health offers the following guidelines:

- On New Year's Eve, stay indoors and close your windows and doors.
- Check that your air conditioner or air purifier is working properly; change filters if necessary.
- Do not smoke and avoid second-hand smoke.
- If you take medication, make sure you have an adequate supply..
- Contact your physician to get clear instructions about what to do if your lung condition suddenly worsens.
- Avoid people who have colds or other lung infections and wash your hands thoroughly.
- Drink plenty of fluids to loosen mucus. Warm beverages work best.
- Get plenty of rest and limit physical exertion.

While these suggestions are intended primarily for persons with respiratory or chronic lung disease, they are also useful for healthy persons during air pollution episodes such as particulates, firework smoke, or volcanic haze.

For further information regarding air quality you may contact the Clean Air Branch at 586-4200. If you wish to obtain additional information on respiratory health or Safe Haven from the New Year's fireworks you may contact the American Lung Association of Hawaii at 537-5966 or visit their website at <http://www.ala-hawaii.org/safehaven.asp>.

The ambient air quality data collected during the New Year's celebration is expected to be available next week.

#

For information contact:
Wilfred Nagamine
Department of Health
(808) 586-4200
wilfred.nagamine@doh.hawaii.gov