

Press Conference  
EPA's Execution of a Search Warrant in Waianae  
May 13, 2008

"The Life of the Land is Perpetuated in Righteousness." This is an important phrase to our people in Hawaii because of our cultural understanding of how important it is to take care of our environment and to do what is right in order to preserve it for our future generations.

For the federal government, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (or EPA) is responsible for investigating federal violations of our EPA laws. Those federal laws are clear as to how to dispose of our hazardous waste products, like unused gasoline, oil, car batteries and other waste products like anti-freeze and even car tires.

Additionally, it is universal common sense that we do not dispose of hazardous waste products by burying it, because of its harmful effects to our land and to the health of innocent people. That is why, any violation of EPA laws in this respect is considered a serious crime which may subject anyone to up to five years in federal prison.

This morning, investigators from the Environmental Protection Agency, along with the assistance of other state and federal agencies, began executing a Search Warrant at 87-1161 Hakimo Road out on the Waianae Coast. Investigators are searching this approximate 10-acre property, for 55 gallon drums believed to contain certain chemical substances, along with other hazardous waste like large amounts of gasoline, hundreds of gallons of waste oil, hundreds of tires, a large number of thrown away car batteries - still containing acid, and used automobile anti-freeze liquid (which contains lead).

Most of these items are believed to be buried at various sites on the property, and it is alleged that companies would pay money to the lessee of the property to allow them to dump

their waste into holes on the property.

For sometime now, investigators have been hearing of the illegal dumping of waste and other ignitable, corrosive, reactive or toxic materials in the Waianae area. This type of illegal dumping not only hurts our environment, but it has the potential of harming innocent children and families living nearby.

These type of materials also have the potential of seeping out into our oceans — damaging our oceans, our fish population and our reefs. Finally, these materials also have the potential of seeping downward into our precious drinking water and possibly poisoning our people.

These are reasons why we take these instances of illegal dumping of hazardous waste seriously.

Waianae, — or any other place in this state is not a rubbish can — we are not a dumping ground for people who have no concern about our health and the safety of our families and children.

Thus, EPA is launching statewide “Operation E Ola Pono 2008” — in order to seek out and investigate illegal dumping of hazardous waste in Hawaii. We are also asking for the public’s help in reporting illegal dumping in our state. Through this initiative, it is hoped that more people will be held accountable for their wrongful actions when it comes to abusing our air, our land, and our waters.

The EPA has joined forces with other local, state and federal agencies to form a task force for investigating and prosecuting these types of crimes. This Hawaii Environmental Enforcement Task Force meets every quarter in order to discuss better enforcement of our

environmental laws, and to share information and responsibility for these cases. And I commend the EPA for its leadership in this task force.

I have been told that upon entering the property early this morning, weapons were found by investigators, and that two individuals are now in custody facing federal firearm charges, which carries a possible 10 year prison sentence. At this time, I have no more information on this matter other than to say, we are awaiting more information from agents in the field — so that we may be able to file federal charges, if appropriate.

At this time, I would like to thank the EPA for its leadership in this operation, and I also would like to thank the FBI, DEA, ICE, U.S. Coast Guard Investigative Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Investigative Service, and the State of Hawaii Department of Health — who are assisting in this investigation and in the execution of the Search Warrant.

This case is still being investigated, and we are hoping to have the chemical samples which are being taken by EPA analyzed as quickly as possible, before considering the next legal step in this case.

I have assigned this case to Assistant U.S. Attorney Marshall Silverberg for prosecution. In the future, he, along with Supervisory Assistant U.S. Attorney Ron Johnson, will make themselves available to you for further questions about this case.

Our culture in Hawaii requires us to take care of our environment. And it is true, the life of our land can only be perpetuated through the righteousness of our people. For those who wish not to practice this important cultural axiom, I say this: — you are violating our environmental laws, and federal charges against you are coming.