



Our Children's Earth Foundation | 100 First Street, Suite 100-367, San Francisco, CA 94105

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Honolulu City and County liable for thousands of Clean Water Act Violations**

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Honolulu, Hawaii -- Federal court judge, David Ezra has found the City and County of Honolulu liable for over eight thousand violations of the federal Clean Water Act (CWA) in a citizen lawsuit brought by the Sierra Club, Hawaii Thousand Friends and Our Children's Earth Foundation.

"This has been a long road for the citizens of Oahu, but the court has now issued an important ruling for clean water," said Jeff Mikulina, director of the Sierra Club, Hawai'i Chapter. "We will continue to press for the actions that the city will need to take to comply with the Clean Water Act and keep our ocean waters clean and safe."

The judge found that the City's sewage discharges from its Sand Island wastewater treatment plant fail to meet CWA standards due to its excessive levels of bacteria, pesticides, and other pollutants. The judge further found that the city failed to construct a disinfection facility at the Sand Island plant years past the deadline for doing so, another violation of the CWA. The Judge's order came in responses to a lawsuit filed by the citizens' groups in 2004.

"The court's ruling underscores that the city's poorly operated sewage system has consistently failed to deliver the treatment required by federal law. We have tried unsuccessfully for several years to convince the city to take the needed steps to fix the treatment plant problems. The court's ruling will hopefully send a message that the city will at long last heed," said Donna Wong, Executive Director of Hawai'i's Thousand Friends.

"The court's ruling underscores the importance of citizen watchdogs in pressing for solutions to Honolulu's sewage mess," said Our Children's Earth Foundation spokesman Mike Costa.

The Court's summary judgment order resolves the city's liability for its CWA violations. The next step will be for the court to determine what remedy to impose on the city, including ordering upgrades to the sewage treatment system such as biological treatment.

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*Founded in 1892, the Sierra Club is the nation's oldest and largest grassroots environmental organization, with over 700,000 members across the country. The Sierra Club actively promotes conservation by influencing public policy through grassroots activism, public education, lobbying and litigation. [www.sierraclub.org](http://www.sierraclub.org)*

*Since 1980, Hawaii's Thousand Friends has advocated for protection of the environment, cultural resources, and human health and responsible land use planning in Hawai'i, bringing several prior lawsuits against the City and County of Honolulu for violations of the Clean Water Act at the Sand Island, Honouliuli, and Kailua Wastewater Treatment Plants. [www.hawaii1000friends.org](http://www.hawaii1000friends.org)*

*Founded in 1998, Our Children's Earth Foundation is a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting the public, especially children, from the health impacts of pollution. Through a combined strategy of litigation, education and advocacy, OCE empowers individuals, families and local communities to participate in decisions that impact environmental quality. [www.ocefoundation.org](http://www.ocefoundation.org).*

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