



## **MEDIA ADVISORY**

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### **ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS ALLEGING CWA VIOLATIONS AGAINST CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU TO PRESENT ARGUMENTS IN COURT TODAY**

**What:** Three environmental groups, which filed a lawsuit in federal court in against the City and County of Honolulu last July, will present arguments in the case Monday. The groups allege that the City and County continue to violate the federal Clean Water Act (CWA) by spilling raw sewage from pipes and pumps. There have been 22 sewage spills since January 2005 alone, involving spills of millions of gallons of raw sewage public streets and waterways, and even into the homes of O'ahu residents.

**Where:** The oral argument will be presented in the Federal District Court, Prince Jonah Kuhio Kalaniana'ole Building, 300 Ala Moana Boulevard, Honolulu.

**When:** Monday, April 4 at 10:30 a.m.

**Who:** Lawyers for the Sierra Club, Hawai'i Chapter, Hawai'i's Thousand Friends, and Our Children's Earth will present oral arguments in the case.

**Why:** The groups allege that the City has committed hundreds of violations of the federal Clean Water Act. The lawsuit alleges that the City has repeatedly violated its permits by failing to timely maintain, fix, or upgrade wastewater treatment facilities, causing discharges of raw or inadequately treated sewage into ocean outfalls that exceed limits set by law for harmful bacteria and cancer-causing pesticides.

The suit also alleges that the City has committed over 1,200 sewage spills in the last several years. These spills sent large volumes of raw sewage streaming into private residences and businesses, streets, storm drains, and numerous waterways. Nearshore coastal waters were affected and beaches were closed. Raw sewage and sanitary waste contain human bacteriological, viral, and parasitic pathogens, as well as toxic chemicals from solvents, detergents, cleansers, inks, pesticides, paints, pharmaceuticals and other chemicals discarded by households and businesses – all of which cause human illnesses.

## *About the Environmental Organizations*

*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, Hawai'i'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.hawaiis1000friends.org](http://www.hawaiis1000friends.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 enforcement, 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)*