



Photo by Kyle Kajihiro

Our Rights

Why Malama 'Aina?

In Hawaiian culture, we understand the delicate balance between Akua (Creator), Kanaka (people), and 'Aina (land). We live in harmony with this sacred earth because we know that everything is interdependent – whatever we do to the 'aina we do to ourselves. When it is clean, we are healthy. When it is poisoned, we are sick. 'Aina is our life. It is our home! We are its guardians and must care for 'aina for our cultural, ecological and spiritual survival.

Not only is our kuleana to take care of the land and our health, it is the responsibility of our government, industries and military institutions to be accountable for the environmental impacts they inflict on our 'aina and our kanaka. Because their impact can lead to great hazardous harm, we must demand that they act with precaution.

The elements of precaution are: 1) When we have reasonable suspicion that *harm* is occurring or may occur and 2) we have scientific *uncertainty*, then 3) we have a *duty to act* to prevent harm.⁷

Our current system uses risk assessment for decision making. Risk assessment determines the level of risk in a particular activity. It puts the burden on individuals to prove there is a potential for harm. The precautionary principle assumes there will be harm or risk unless proven otherwise. While risk assessment is like gambling with our health, the precautionary principle allows us to be better safe than sorry. Which do you prefer?



Photo by Lynette Cruz

How is Environmental Justice a Human Right?*

According to the Principles of Environmental Justice and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, it is our basic human right to live and thrive in a clean and healthy environment. We have the fundamental right to political, cultural, economic, spiritual, and environmental self-determination. This means we decide how our lands and resources are to be used. We decide how we will restore and protect our 'aina from military and industrial abuses. And we decide what we allow into our bodies and our communities.

We have the right to be free from ecological destruction and environmental hazards from corporations and military operations. We have the right to be protected from toxic wastes and radioactive materials that threaten the fundamental right to clean air, land, water, and food. All past and current polluters must be held strictly accountable to the communities impacted by their contamination. They must clean up, not build up!

Finally, as victims of environmental injustice, we have the right to receive full compensation and reparations for damages as well as quality health care.

Depleted Uranium has been found at Schofield and Pohakuloa Training Area (PTA). Communities downwind are at greatest risk. Hawaii County Council recently passed a resolution to halt live fire exercises at PTA. What is being done at Schofield?

Military off-shore dumping of chemical weapons and ordnance have been found in our ocean. Is this why healthy avid surfers have developed cancers or why people have skin irritations after playing in the water?



Photo by Kyle Kajihiro

Childhood leukemia and cancer are associated with electromagnetic radiation.⁹ Could Naval Transmitter Facility Lualualei be responsible for the high rates of cancer and leukemia in the nearby community?

Makua Valley remains vulnerable to ecological and cultural destruction. How can you help save Makua Valley?

Landfills add toxic waste to an already stressed community. Can you afford to allow this to happen in your community?

	Contaminants																						
Health Effects	Arsenic	Asbestos	Cadmium	Chromium	Coal	Cyanogen Chloride	Depleted Uranium	Dioxin	Electromagnetic Radiation	Hydrogen Cyanide	HMX	Lead	Lewisite	Mustard Gas	Mercury	Perchlorate	PCBs	RDX	TNT	Tetrachloroethylene	Trichloroethylene	White Phosphorus	
Anemia																							
Birth Defects	X	X					X	X				X			X					X	X		
Brain Damage									X	X		X			X					X			
Cancer	X	X	X	X	X		X	X			X	X		X	X		X			X			
Central Nervous System											X	X				X		X					
Heart Damage	X								X			X											X
Immune System								X			X	X		X									
Kidney Damage	X	X	X	X			X				X			X					X		X	X	
Learning Development			X					X	X		X												
Leukemia							X	X															
Liver Damage	X			X			X			X										X		X	X
Lung Cancer	X	X	X	X	X		X					X	X		X					X			
Respiratory Damage	X	X		X	X	X			X		X	X	X		X						X		
Nausea	X					X			X		X	X						X					
Nerve Damage							X															X	
Reproductive Damage							X				X	X								X			
Skin Problems	X			X	X	X	X				X	X					X			X			
Thyroid Glands Damage									X						X								
Vomiting	X		X						X		X	X	X					X					X

Agency for Toxic Substances & Disease Registry, 2007

Our Kuleana

How can we aloha 'aina and support our community in health?

- Understand our human rights to a healthy environment. Executive order 12898 on Environmental Justice states that no group of people should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, municipal, and commercial operations or the execution of federal, state, local, and tribal programs and policies.¹⁰
- Voice our concerns about the release of contaminants and their health effects on our community. Discuss these concerns with our health providers, our friends, our family, our community leaders, and our congressional leaders.
- Demand the highest standards of clean-up and restoration in existing and known environmental toxic areas. Demand that no further actions take place that puts more strain on the environment until clean-up and restoration is completed. More importantly, we must prevent these dangerous substances from being released before contamination occurs.
- Get involved in community groups that work on environmental justice issues. Tell your story if you think you have been contaminated. We have a duty to protect our resources and environment for future generations!

Malama 'aina!

Aloha 'aina!



Photo by Terri Keko'olani

Don't settle for less! A clean environment is a HUMAN RIGHT!

Resources:

Environmental Justice: www.ejnet.org/ej

UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples:
www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfi/en/declaration.html
www.iwgia.org/sw248.asp

Precautionary Principle: www.rachel.org/lib/pp_def.htm

Arc Ecology: www.arcecolgy.org

Southwest Workers Union: www.swunion.org/ej.html

Alaska Community Action on Toxics: www.akaction.org



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References:

¹Davies, K., & Hauge, D. (2005). Economic costs of disease and disabilities attributable to environmental contaminants in Washington state. Collaborative on Health and Environment-Washington Research and Information Working Group, Seattle, WA.

²Department of Defense. (2007). Defense Environmental Programs Annual Report to Congress. <http://deparc.xservices.com/do/generateReport>

³Military Toxics Project. (2002). Communities in the line of fire: The environmental, cultural, and human health impacts of military munitions and firing ranges. Military Toxics Project: Lewiston, ME.

⁴State of Hawaii Department of Health. (2004). State of Asthma.

⁵Department of Health and Human Services (2007). Agency for Toxic Substances & Disease Registry. <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaq.html>

⁶Environmental Protection Agency. (2008). Hawaii Report: Toxics Release Inventory 2006 Reporting Year. <http://www.epa.gov/region09/toxic/tri/report/06/HawaiiFactsheet2006.pdf>

⁷Montague, P. (Jan. 2008). The precautionary principle in the real world. Environmental Research Foundation. http://www.rachel.org/lib/pp_def.htm

⁸Principles of Environmental Justice. (April, 1996). <http://www.ejnet.org/ej/principles.html>

⁹State of Hawaii Department of Health, Environmental Epidemiology Program. (1986). Cancer incidence in census tracts with broadcasting towers in Honolulu, Hawaii. The Program: Honolulu, HI.

¹⁰Presidential Documents: Executive Order 12898. (Feb. 1994). Federal Register 59(32). <http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/executive-orders/pdf/12898.pdf>

Our Health Our Environment Our Rights



Photo by Lynette Cruz

It is our kuleana to protect the
'aina for future generations!



Pupukahi i holomua!
Unite and move forward.



**American Friends
Service Committee**

Our Health Our Environment

Socio-economic status and the environment play a key role in affecting our health. Environmental contaminants are in the air, water, and land. Communities of color and the poor are most impacted by environmental pollution. While many health problems are hereditary, illnesses that are linked to environmental factors include asthma, cancer, birth defects, heart disease, and neurobehavioral disorders (ADHD, autism, mental retardation, cerebral palsy).¹

What environmental toxics are threatening our health?

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) monitors the amount of chemicals released in Hawaii. Persistent, Bio-accumulative, and Toxic chemicals (PBTs) are the greatest concern. These chemicals remain in the environment for a very long time, building up in our food and bodies. We become exposed through inhaling toxics in the air, contact through skin, and ingesting food that's been contaminated through soil and water. PBT pollutants can cause health problems long after they are released. They threaten our health and ecosystem.

What toxics are in Hawaii?

There are **875 MILITARY CONTAMINATED SITES IN HAWAII**.² The contamination hazards include unexploded ordnance; various types of fuels and petroleum products; organic solvents such as **Tetra-chloroethylene** and **Trichloroethylene**, **Dioxins** and **PCBs**; explosives and propellants such as **RDX**, **TNT**, **HMX** and **Perchlorate**; and heavy metals such as **Cadmium**, **Chromium**, **Depleted Uranium**, **Mercury**, and **Lead**.³

Waianae and Nanakuli have the highest rates of asthma on O'ahu.⁴ What is affecting the air quality in these communities?

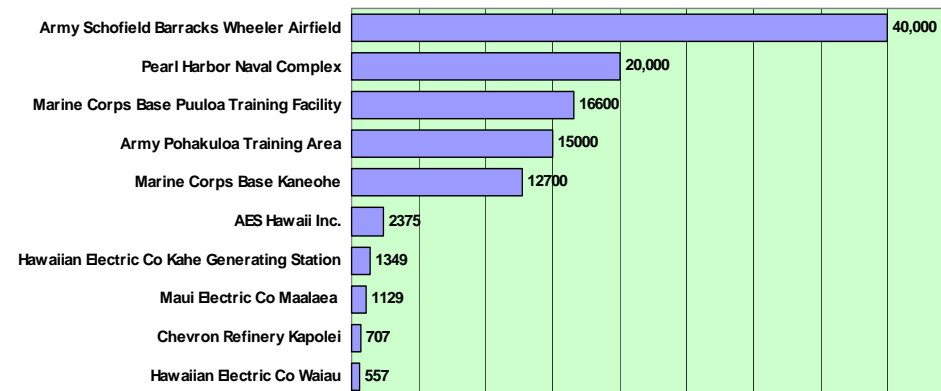
Though initial exposure may not cause immediate harm, the **accumulation** of these pollutants are known to cause grave effects to our health. These highly toxic chemicals damage the liver, kidneys, nervous system, respiratory system, thyroid glands, reproductive system and brain. Children are especially prone to birth defects and neurobehavioral damages. Many of these health effects eventually lead to cancer.⁵

Cancer rates are higher in areas exposed to toxic contaminants.¹ How many people in your community have cancer?

Birth defects and neurobehavioral disorders are linked to environmental pollutants.¹ What are the rates in your community?

Who are the polluters?

2006 Hawaii Top Ten (10) Facilities Releasing PBT Chemicals (In Pounds)⁶



The top five (5) polluters are MILITARY facilities, accounting for 94% of all persistent bio-accumulative and toxic chemicals released into Hawaii's environment.⁶