

**REPORT TO THE
TWENTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE
STATE OF HAWAII**

Sanitation Branch Annual Audit

**Pursuant to Chapter 321-27.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes,
requesting the Department of Health to submit an annual
audit report of the Sanitation Branch**

**PREPARED BY:
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
STATE OF HAWAII**

November 28, 2007

SANITATION BRANCH ACTIVITIES AND FINANCES DURING FY 2007

The Sanitation Branch is one of the core programs of public health that affects the broadest range of health-related activities. Its programs are established by statutes and administrative rules as statewide programs. This report provides a broad overview of the functional role and activities of the Sanitation Branch, as required under Section 321-27.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, that states, "The Department shall perform annual audits of the sanitation branch to be completed by November 30 of each year, and shall include an audit of:

- (1) Fees collected;
- (2) The number and results of sanitation inspections;
- (3) The number of training seminars held; and
- (4) The cost of training personnel in the sanitation branch."

The function of the Sanitation Branch is to promote and maintain a sanitary and healthful environment for the people and visitors of Hawaii by implementing legally required programs for:

- (1) Food protection;
- (2) Assessing and assuring that hospitals and medical facilities meet sanitation requirements;
- (3) Inspection of tenement houses, lodging houses, boarding houses, and hotels;
- (4) Licensing of registered sanitarians, tattoo artists, and embalmers; and
- (5) Permitting of barber shops, beauty parlors, massage parlors, tattoo shops, mortuaries, public swimming pools, and public laundries.

The primary function of the Sanitation Branch is the food protection program which has evolved into a complex program focusing on public health practices through education, partnerships, prevention, assessment and compliance. Food is a significant element of Hawaii's multi-ethnic culture and is a principal attraction for visitors of Hawaii. The Sanitation Branch protects residents and visitors from exposure to food borne illnesses by conducting inspections and assessments of food service establishments to see that the food they serve is safe to eat.

In addition, the Branch promotes food protection through education. The Food Safety Consultation and Education Program plays a vital role in preventing food borne illnesses by developing and implementing food safety surveillance and control plans, and conducting educational activities to assist the food service industry and food handlers.

The current educational approach to inform the public and motivate operators toward compliance with applicable standards and regulations has remained unchanged. In this regard, it is recognized that compliance with rules and regulations, not enforcement per se, is the primary objective of the Sanitation Branch. Wide dissemination of information concerning the technical and scientific basis for the program's regulatory requirements should contribute to a clearer understanding of the necessity for compliance. Education is continuous, especially in areas where scientific findings occur. An informed public with a clear understanding of the public health rationale of program functions and corresponding regulatory requirements is a fundamental goal in assuring that potential environmental health problems are identified and resolved before actual illness, injury or fatality occurs.

Staff training also is a significant element for maximizing efficiency and effectiveness of staff in order to satisfy performance of program objectives. Mechanisms to provide on-going education continue to update and cross-train staff with technological and organizational changes.

FEES COLLECTED

Under Section 321-11.5, HRS, the Department collects fees for permits, licenses, inspections, various certificates, variances and investigations and reviews. These fees are deposited into the Environmental Health Education Fund under Section 321-27(a), HRS, which supports training of Environmental Health Services Division staff and food establishment personnel and educational outreach to the general public regarding food safety. Revenues from fees collected for fiscal year 2007 and deposited into the fund totaled \$657,447.39.

NUMBER AND RESULTS OF SANITATION INSPECTIONS

The Sanitation Branch conducted 8,691 inspections involving 7,456 establishments during fiscal year 2007 and found 10,207 violations. The branch responded to or investigated 974 food establishment complaints of which 237 were directly alleging a food borne illness.

NUMBER OF TRAINING SEMINARS HELD

For fiscal year 2007, the Food Safety Consultation and Education Program provided the following:

Food Certification Workshops:	27
Student Attendance:	644
Students Certified:	560
Food Safety Classes:	53
Student Attendance:	1,123

In addition to on-going workshops conducted by the Food Safety Consultation and Education Program, the following are highlights of personnel training for fiscal year 2007:

1. Three Registered Sanitarians from Oahu, Maui and Kauai attended the USDA Food Safety Inspection Service conference in Denver, Colorado, September 23-30, 2006.
2. The Registered Sanitarian whose main responsibility is regulating the milk industry in Hawaii attended a National Conference of Interstate Milk Shippers (NCIMS) Dairy Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HAACP) Auditing Course in Chicago, IL, December 10-15, 2006 and a U. S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Dairy Farm Sanitation and Inspection course in Bismarck, ND February 10-17, 2007 as part of his certification as a State Milk Rating Officer for Hawaii.
3. Two Registered Sanitarians attended the National Conference of Milk Shippers in Salt Lake City, UT on May 5-11, 2007.
4. A Registered Sanitarian attended the Association of Food and Drug Officials annual conference in San Antonio, TX on June 14-21, 2007.
5. A statewide Sanitation Branch Strategic Planning Meeting was conducted on Maui June 7-8, 2007.

COST OF TRAINING PERSONNEL

The cost for personnel training totaled \$57,163.57.

CLOSING REMARKS

Despite continued efforts and progress in improving the overall quality and safety of foods produced in this country, food borne illnesses remain a serious public health problem. Pathogenic E. coli, Norovirus and Salmonellosis contamination of food continue to find its way to the news headlines. Continued vigilance in protecting the public from food borne illnesses is a vital function of the Sanitation Branch. Current resources are dedicated to support of program activities, personnel enhancement opportunities and technology infrastructure advancements. Sustained efforts toward prudent utilization of current resources will continue to ensure protection of public health needs.