
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO DISASTER PREPAREDNESS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. (a) The disaster preparedness interagency task
2 force is established within the department of accounting and
3 general services for administrative purposes only.

4 (b) The task force shall consist of the following members,
5 as follows:

6 (1) The vice-director of civil defense, who shall serve as
7 the chairperson of the task force;

8 (2) The adjutant general or the adjutant general's
9 designee;

10 (3) The director of health or the director's designee;

11 (4) The chairperson of the board of land and natural
12 resources or the chairperson's designee;

13 (5) The director of public safety or the director's
14 designee;

15 (6) The director of transportation or the director's
16 designee;



- 1 (7) The director of business, economic development, and
2 tourism or the director's designee;
- 3 (8) The superintendent of education or the
4 superintendent's designee;
- 5 (9) An expert on geology from the University of Hawaii
6 appointed by the president of the University of
7 Hawaii;
- 8 (10) An expert on volcanism from the University of Hawaii
9 appointed by the president of the University of
10 Hawaii;
- 11 (11) A representative of the University of Hawaii college
12 of tropical agriculture and human resources appointed
13 by the president of the University of Hawaii;
- 14 (12) The mayors of the counties of Honolulu, Hawaii, Kauai,
15 and Maui or the respective mayor's designees;
- 16 (13) The meteorologist-in-charge of the Central Pacific
17 Hurricane Center shall be requested to serve;
- 18 (14) A meteorologist from the National Weather Service
19 shall be requested to serve; and
- 20 (15) The executive director of the Pacific Disaster Center
21 shall be requested to serve.
- 22 (c) The task force shall have the following duties:



- 1 (1) Identify existing and potential natural hazards;
- 2 (2) Designate natural hazard impact zones;
- 3 (3) Establish priorities for natural hazard mitigation and
4 disaster preparation and mitigation;
- 5 (4) Develop policies, requirements, and incentives for
6 mitigating the problems caused by natural hazards;
- 7 (5) Develop plans for best responses to natural hazards
8 and other disasters to minimize costs and protect the
9 interests of Hawaii's residents, their possessions and
10 pets, and visitors to the State, including plans that
11 ensure the reliability of communication networks and
12 power supplies to major airports, health care
13 facilities, and other essential services.
- 14 (d) The task force shall have the following duties
15 specific to the study, prevention, and mitigation of the effects
16 of vog:
 - 17 (1) Establish an effective central point of contact at
18 which the public can gain access to information
19 regarding various vog-related concerns;
 - 20 (2) Work with health care providers and health insurance
21 providers to determine if there is a notable increase



- 1 in specific ailments or specific claims during days
2 with heavy vog;
- 3 (3) Develop a coordinated and efficient system for
4 collecting health data to ascertain the possible
5 short-term and long-term health effects of exposure to
6 vog, sulfur dioxide, and volcanic emissions;
- 7 (4) Evaluate the psychological impact of vog on school
8 children and develop age-appropriate counseling
9 strategies;
- 10 (5) Work with health insurance companies to investigate
11 the feasibility of providing coverage for purchases of
12 air filters or other air filtration devices for
13 qualified individuals affected by vog;
- 14 (6) Work with hospitals to retrofit them with air
15 filtration devices and ensure a sealed environment to
16 lessen the impact of vog on patients;
- 17 (7) Gather and provide to the public information regarding
18 water safety for catchment systems, including:
- 19 (A) Finding effective and affordable methods to test
20 water pH levels to ensure the safety of catchment
21 system drinking water and providing information
22 on safe pH ranges;



- 1 (B) Identifying similar methods to test for lead,
2 copper, and other harmful agents that could enter
3 a water catchment system;
- 4 (C) Publicizing resources available to the public to
5 have their water tested for lead, copper, and
6 other harmful agents;
- 7 (D) Creating a clear and easy-to-use checklist to
8 assist residents with catchment systems in
9 determining what actions can be taken when
10 dealing with water with high acidity or
11 pollutants such as lead, copper, or volcanic ash;
12 and
- 13 (E) Coordinating water testing methods with those of
14 the University of Hawaii college of tropical
15 agriculture and human resources cooperative
16 extension services;
- 17 (8) Develop a plan to install air conditioning and air
18 filtration devices in schools;
- 19 (9) Establish shelters outfitted with air filters for
20 evacuated residents;



- 1 (10) Provide sulfur dioxide monitors for schools and
2 establish protocols for actions to take when high
3 levels of sulfur dioxide have been detected;
- 4 (11) Consult the charter school system to determine what
5 practices they have adopted that may be used
6 effectively in the public schools to ensure the safety
7 of children;
- 8 (12) Develop safe practices for school children affected by
9 vog;
- 10 (13) Investigate the possible use of services from civilian
11 environmental scientists contracted by the United
12 States Army and stationed at the Pohakuloa Training
13 Area as an investigative team to determine recommended
14 actions in dealing with vog;
- 15 (14) Provide real property tax relief for farmers who have
16 been negatively impacted by vog;
- 17 (15) Collect data on the short-term and long-term economic
18 impacts of vog;
- 19 (16) Identify, map, and provide information to the public
20 on alternate evacuation routes, such as back roads,
21 whether located on government or private property;



- 1 (17) Develop plans to assist residents in the event that
- 2 permanent relocation becomes necessary;
- 3 (18) Provide sulfur dioxide monitors to farmers in the
- 4 southern part of Hawaii county and train farmers in
- 5 the use of monitors;
- 6 (19) Establish a local early warning system to inform
- 7 farmers and other residents of a sudden increase in
- 8 vog concentrations;
- 9 (20) Establish monitoring and sampling systems for fluorine
- 10 concentrations in foliage in areas affected by vog;
- 11 (21) Work with farmers to conduct comprehensive research,
- 12 including controlled experiments and field trials, to
- 13 determine the best methods for employing vog
- 14 treatments such as water, anti-desiccants, and
- 15 paraffin waxes;
- 16 (22) Conduct research to find specific varieties of crops
- 17 more resistant to the effects of vog;
- 18 (23) Establish financial assistance programs, either grants
- 19 or low-interest loans, for farmers adversely affected
- 20 by vog;



- 1 (24) Establish assistance programs, either grants or low-
2 interest loans to assist ranchers in repairing ranch
3 and pasture infrastructure damaged by vog;
- 4 (25) Restructure or adapt rules of existing loan programs
5 to address the specific problems posed by vog;
- 6 (26) When available, assist farmers in applying for and
7 receiving assistance under the federal Supplemental
8 Disaster Assistance Program;
- 9 (27) Assist interested farmers to form agricultural non-
10 profit cooperatives that may be eligible for
11 additional federal assistance from the United States
12 Department of Agriculture Rural Development;
- 13 (28) If it appears that vog will persist indefinitely,
14 begin to search for alternative areas to which farmers
15 who need to relocate their operations can move;
- 16 (29) Provide information and training to hotel and tourism
17 industry employees to respond to questions from and
18 provide information to visitors about vog and its
19 possible effects;
- 20 (30) Transmit civil defense, agricultural, economic,
21 health, and other relevant data and findings collected
22 by the task force to the University of Hawaii at Hilo



1 center for the study of active volcanoes for
2 archiving; and

3 (31) Disseminate information on the findings of the task
4 forces on health and safety, and other relevant
5 information, to the public in a timely manner.

6 (e) As used in this section:

7 "Disaster" means any natural or human-caused catastrophe,
8 the occurrence of which is unanticipated or difficult to
9 predict, that results in significant property damage, hardship,
10 suffering, or loss of life within the State.

11 "Natural hazard" means hurricane, storm, flood, tsunami,
12 tidal wave, wind-driven water, earthquake, volcanic activity,
13 volcanic smog or "vog", lava flow, rockslide, earthslide, fire,
14 or other natural disaster.

15 "Task force" means the disaster preparedness interagency
16 task force.

17 "Vog" means volcanic smog and includes any other gaseous,
18 chemical, or particulate volcanic emissions into the air that
19 result from volcanic activity in the State.

20 (f) The task force shall report annually to the governor
21 and the legislature on its findings and recommendations,



1 including proposed legislation, no later than twenty days prior
2 to the convening of each regular session of the legislature.

3 SECTION 2. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

4

INTRODUCED BY: _____ 

JAN 22 2009

Report Title:

Disaster Preparedness Interagency Task Force

Description:

Establishes a disaster preparedness interagency task force to develop a disaster preparedness and mitigation plan for Hawaii. Directs the task force to take various actions to study and mitigate the effects of vog.

