



For Immediate Release

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Free Homeowner's Handbook Now Available

May 18th marked the beginning of hurricane awareness week in Hawai'i. This is the time to gather information on protecting your family and property from a hurricane before such a storm strikes our shores. This is also the time to take those critical, potentially life-saving steps toward safeguarding your home in the event of a devastating storm.

The Homeowner's Handbook to Prepare for Natural Hazards, published by the University of Hawai'i Sea Grant College Program, provides detailed information on how to prepare your home for a hurricane and other natural hazards including earthquakes, tsunamis, and floods. Protecting your home often means protecting your family. The handbook outlines small and cost-effective steps that can significantly reduce the risks of damage and loss due to a natural hazard. Dennis Hwang, lead author of the handbook notes "Even last year, tropical storm Flossie could have caused damage to houses without hurricane clips - typically houses built before the late 1980's to early 1990's. Therefore it is important to prepare and the handbook provides key information to help the homeowner get ready."

Due to an overwhelming response from the public, all printed copies from the initial printing were distributed within a very short time. Thanks to generous support from the State Civil Defense Agency, funding was made available to re-print this free publication.

The popularity and pertinence of the handbook has prompted local Wal-Mart stores to make copies available to customers. "We're proud to offer this preparedness guide for our customers in partnership with Islander Group," said Tom Munson, Hawai'i Merchandise Manager for Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. "Our islands are prone to a variety of natural disasters and this book helps with key tips for preparation and awareness."

Free printed copies of the handbook are available for pick-up at the University of Hawai'i Sea Grant College Program. A \$5.00 shipping and handling fee will apply to mailed orders. The handbook is also available for free on-line and can be downloaded from the University of Hawai'i Sea Grant College Program website: www.soest.hawaii.edu/seagrant.

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The University of Hawai'i Sea Grant College Program supports an innovative program of research, education and extension services directed to the improved understanding and stewardship of coastal and marine resources of the state, region and nation. Science serving Hawai'i and the Pacific for 40 years.