



# News Release

For Immediate Release  
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## Water Watch Launches in Waikīkī

Paddlers, surfers and rough water swimmers want clean water to play in and our native reef life depends on it for its survival. Unfortunately, while water quality is one of those topics that we all probably care about, it is a topic that many of us don't *know* much about. A new volunteer opportunity coordinated by the Reef Watch Waikīkī hopes to change that. Through monthly "Water Watch" gatherings, community members will have the chance to educate themselves about water quality issues.

"Participating in the Waikīkī Water Watch is a great way to learn more about protecting our watersheds for the benefit of our nearshore waters and reefs," explains Stephanie Hurder. Hurder is an intern with Reef Watch Waikīkī and coordinates the monthly Water Watch events. "It's also a great way to meet like-minded people from the community who are committed to learning more and making a difference."

During the monthly water quality test days, participants have the chance to learn about basic water quality parameters, how they are measured, and what the tests tell us. Hurder encourages anyone who is curious to give it a try, explaining, "All are welcome, no prior experience is necessary. Just come prepared to get wet since we collect water samples from near shore." Each event wraps-up with a group potluck at the park near Queen's Beach.

**The next two Waikīkī Water Watch events are scheduled for November 9<sup>th</sup> and December 14<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 a.m. to noon.**

The program has a small team of volunteers who have helped out since the Water Watch started in September. Asked why she chose to get involved, volunteer Virginia Varga exclaimed, "I wanted to participate because I was interested in learning what type of water I was swimming in! I wasn't disappointed."

Water Watch is just one component of Reef Watch Waikīkī, a project of the University of Hawai'i Sea Grant College Program. Led by Waikīkī Coastal Coordinator Jennifer Barrett, the project has been building a committed network of community volunteers and visitor industry stakeholders over the past year. Barrett shares that, "the heart of this project is our dedicated volunteers who are collecting data, sharing what they learn with students at area schools, and generating a lot of interest and excitement about the possibility that working together, we can begin to restore the health of Waikīkī's once thriving reefs."

To learn more about Water Watch, please contact Stephanie at [stephanie@reefwatchwaikiki.org](mailto:stephanie@reefwatchwaikiki.org) or visit [www.facebook.com/reefwatch](http://www.facebook.com/reefwatch).

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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 41 years.*