



WATER MATTERS

Safe, dependable, and affordable water, now and into the future

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Customer Alert: People Posing as BWS Employees

Customers are urged to be aware of individuals impersonating Board of Water Supply (BWS) field employees.

In one instance, a resident in the Salt Lake area reported a man who claimed he was “changing out water meters,” yet lacked the standard indicators of an authentic BWS employee.

The resident said the man wore a yellow reflective shirt and drove a plain white car.

Official BWS field staff always carry City & County of Honolulu ID badges, wear BWS-

branded clothing, and operate distinctively marked BWS vehicles.

The BWS has also received reports of persons claiming they need to enter a resident’s home to test the drinking water.

This is not a service the BWS performs.

Water quality sampling is carried out at designated locations by trained BWS staff, and residents are never asked to grant in-home access for random testing.

If someone approaches you claiming to be from the BWS but cannot provide proper identification, do not let them into your home.

To confirm the validity of an individual claiming to be a BWS employee, call:

- (808) 748-5000 during business hours (Mon.–Fri., 7:45 a.m.– 4:30 p.m.)

STAY ALERT

Scammers Are on the Move

Official BWS Attire **Official BWS Vehicles**

To verify a BWS employee, call 748-5000
Report suspicious activity to HPD at 9-1-1

- BWS Security at (808) 748-5911 after hours.

If you feel threatened or believe a crime is occurring, please call the Honolulu Police Department at 9-1-1.

For more tips on protecting yourself against scams: www.boardofwatersupply.com/safety.

Other Common Utility Scams:

- Aggressive or unexpected phone calls or visits demanding payment under threat of Immediate shutoff.
- Water disconnection notices sent by text message.

Call (808) 748-5000, ext. 2, to check your account status.

BWS Rebates Double in Value Through City Partnership

Saving water just got more rewarding! The Board of Water Supply, in collaboration with the city’s Department of Environmental Services, has doubled three of its most popular WaterSensible rebates.

The goal is to make it easier for O’ahu residents to choose appliances and devices that deliver long-term savings while caring for our island’s precious *wai* (water).



Families can now earn twice the savings when they upgrade to these water-efficient products.

These increased rebates help significantly offset the higher upfront cost of water-efficient appliances and fixtures.

Here are some examples of the water savings they provide:

- An Energy Star-labeled clothes washer can save thousands of gallons of water each year.
- WaterSense-labeled toilets use 20–60% less water than many older models.
- Smart water monitors go a step further and track water use in real time, alerting you to leaks before they become costly problems.

Product	Previous Rebate	New Rebate Amount
ENERGY STAR Clothes Washer	\$75	\$150
WaterSense-labeled Toilet (1.28 gallons per flush or less)	\$100	\$200
Smart Water Monitor	\$200	\$400

*Note: Rebate amounts cannot exceed the purchase price of the product.

Lower household water use doesn’t just save money, it reduces demand on our drinking water supply and eases pressure on wastewater infrastructure.

Ready to upgrade? It’s easy; please visit www.boardofwatersupply.com/watersensible, call 808-748-5041 or email contactus@hbws.org for full details.

RAD (Rapid Albizia Death) Hui Protect Isle Watersheds

(Ed. Note: This updates a Summer 2022 Water Matters article on Albizia.)

Albizia (*Falcata falcata*) is one of the fastest-growing trees in the world. It can grow up to 20 feet per year, reaching heights of 100 feet or more in as little as five years.

Known for displacing native plant species and dropping large tree limbs, Albizia is a serious threat to our watersheds as well as to people. Even in routine winds, Albizia can cause property damage and larger-scale impacts to vital infrastructure.

In 2014, during Tropical Storm Iselle, fallen Albizia knocked out power and water in the Puna District for two weeks.



Albizia displaces native plants and are known to unexpectedly drop their large limbs and cause severe property damage.

After this disaster, Hawai'i leaders saw the need to protect other communities from the same fate.

In 2020, the Ko'olau Mountains Watershed Partnership (KMWP) began community outreach to raise awareness about Albizia issues and foster community-driven action to reduce its spread.

This resulted in the creation of RAD (Rapid Albizia Death) Hui (Hawaiian for "club" or "association"), often spearheaded by concerned area residents.

These hui support KMWP's work in the upper mauka regions, allowing communities to take an active role in invasive species management in their neighborhoods.

So far, there have been active community RAD efforts in Mānoa, Maunawili, Pālolo, Waiāhole, Waikāne, Kāne'ohe, and He'eia.

The Mānoa RAD Hui, a collaboration of KMWP, community members, and landowners in Mānoa Valley, has been a noteworthy force in community action against Albizia.

Its leader is Scott Snider, with Mālama Mānoa, who began reaching out to his community to alert them to the dangers of Albizia, which can often grow unnoticed in the backyards of homes along Mānoa Stream.

Residents began to recognize how Albizia could worsen the effects of storms and flood events, as well as threaten their homes and lives.

The result is the annual Mānoa Stream Sweep. What began as an annual stream clean-up led to a day dedicated to removing Albizia seedlings in and along the stream.

For six years, community members have trekked through the stream and removed thousands of Albizia seedlings. The Stream

Sweep in September took out 2,310 Albizia trees! In 2026, the project will move to its next phase: removing the largest Albizia.

This year, KMWP has further expanded Albizia outreach into new communities that could potentially be impacted by Albizia.



Members of the Mānoa RAD Hui conduct a stream sweep to remove Albizia seedlings in and along Mānoa Stream.

In September, KMWP hosted its first-ever Albizia control workshop tailored for the Wahiawā/Mililani community during the Day at Lake Wilson at Wahiawā Freshwater State Recreation Area. There, community members were taught to identify Albizia and how to remove them.

KMWP is always seeking motivated community members to get involved in its efforts to reduce Albizia spread.

For more information about KMWP and Albizia, visit: <https://www.koolauwatershed.org/albizia> (Mahalo to KWMP staff for the information and photos used in this article.)

Our jobs help keep O'ahu's water flowing



We can always use more help. Interested? Apply online NOW. www.boardofwatersupply.com/jobs

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