

Honolulu City Council Special Meeting
Wednesday, December 15, 2021
10 A.M.

[Hearing agenda](#)

Register to give oral testimony. Zoom testifiers are strongly encouraged to register at least 24 hours before the start of the meeting.

*Note: Oral testimony is limited to 1 minute for Bill 48 and 3 minutes for Resolution 21-276.

1. Register [here](#)
2. Registrants will receive the Zoom link immediately and an email that contains links and information on joining the meeting by either phone or video conference. Remote testimony will be taken at the start of the agenda and then closed.

Submit written testimony here: <https://tinyurl.com/HnlCouncilTestimony>

[Bill 48 sample written testimony](#)

[Resolution 21-276 sample written testimony](#)

Talking points for Bill & Reso

- The Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility ("Facility") is a prime example of how a leaky underground storage tank can threaten our most precious resource.
- The DOH has concluded that the storage of up to 187 million gallons of fuel, 100 feet above a drinking water resource, is inherently dangerous.
- The Facility's tanks, each with a 12.5 million-gallon capacity, had a quarter-inch thick steel liner when first constructed nearly 80 years ago. They are encased in aging concrete and sit 100 feet above O'ahu's drinking water aquifer. These steel liners have been corroding to the point where many through-wall holes have been found and are now less than one-third of their original thickness in some places.
- These tanks have leaked 180,000 gallons of fuel since they were constructed and the Navy's own risk assessment from 2018 concluded that the probability of an acute leak of between 1,000 and 30,000 gallons (independent of any earthquake risk) over the next ten years is 96%. The Navy cannot prove that the tank or tank system will not leak regulated substances into the environment.
- Approximately 93,000 people living in military housing have been unable to use their water for several weeks. Water will not be restored, and those who were displaced will not be able to return home, for at least six to eight weeks, if not longer. If the Navy water system is further compromised, our housing crisis will mushroom.
- DOH said that a water sample taken from the Red Hill drinking water shaft on December 5 confirmed the water is contaminated with "high levels" of petroleum and gasoline. The sample detected total petroleum hydrocarbons diesel range organics levels 350 times above the DOH Environmental Action Level (EAL) for drinking water, and gasoline range organics more than 66 times the DOH EAL.

- Lower levels of petroleum products were also found in samples collected from the Aliamanu Child Development Center as well as homes located on the Navy's water system.
 - The 14,000 gallon leak of water-fuel mixture through a fire suppression system drain line at Red Hill in mid-November is suspected to be the cause of this water contamination crisis.
- Navy officials cannot be trusted to protect our water. They have lied time and time again:
 - The Navy lied about an active leak at Pearl Harbor for months, discovering the leak in January 2021 but not informing Health Department officials until May. This was revealed in whistleblower emails and documents in October.
 - A whistleblower also told the Department of Health in September that Navy officials provided false testimony and withheld information about the full extent of the Facility's infrastructure, including connected pipelines, as well as "historical records of corrosion issues, including holes in tanks" at its Red Hill fuel facility during legal proceedings.
- The Navy continues to confuse and gaslight community members.
 - The Navy suspended use of its Red Hill water shaft on November 28, but the public only found out on December 1.
 - Hundreds of community members reported chemical smells in their water on November 28 and then health issues on November 29, which the Navy refused to acknowledge as a potential health concern until the state Department of Health advised residents to not drink the clearly contaminated water.
 - A day after the Navy said it had detected diesel in its 'Aiea Hālawā well at levels more than double the DOH safety limit, the military backtracked, saying the contaminated sample "did not come directly" from the well and the Navy does not believe the result proves the well is contaminated.
 - They continue to not be transparent despite agreeing to the Administrative Order of Consent, which requires them to be more forthcoming about operations at the Red Hill facility.
- The BWS Hālawā shaft will be shut down until fuel is removed from the tanks and may not reopen for years to come. This shaft was a source of water for South O'ahu from Hālawā to Maunaloa. The BWS has advised that mandatory water conservation measures will now need to be in place in the summer of 2022.
- Storm drains
 - The Navy "flushed" Red Hill contaminants for days in violation of Department of Health requirements despite repeated warnings. This risked long-lasting effects on birds, plants, fish, and other aquatic life from petroleum contamination

Bill 48 (first reading): Relating to underground storage tanks. (To protect the purity of O'ahu's groundwater.)

**1-minute oral testimony*

Sample testimony

Meeting date: 12/15/2021

Council/PH Committee: Council/public hearing

Agenda Item: Bill 48

Position: Support

Aloha Chair Waters, Vice Chair Kia'āina, and Councilmembers,

As a resident of O'ahu and a water drinker, I strongly support Bill 48, requiring any operator of underground storage tanks with a capacity of 100,000 gallons or more, to obtain a permit from the City. It further stipulates that no permit will be granted unless the applicant proves that the tank or tank system will not leak regulated substances into the environment. We simply cannot permit underground storage tanks of that capacity or larger that pose such immense threat of leaking and contaminating our environment and water supply.

[Share your personal story and how you and your community have been impacted. That personal connection you feel to wanting our water protected holds a lot of weight with decision makers.]

The Red Hill facility – the fragile, antiquated fuel tanks and supporting systems – has a long history of leaking fuel into the surrounding environment and has already contaminated O'ahu's primary drinking water aquifer. Shutting down Red Hill immediately and entirely is the only way to guarantee the safety of our water and our people.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and for taking up this important measure at the council.

Sincerely,

<Your Name>

Resolution 21-276: Urging the permanent removal and relocation of the U.S. Navy Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility underground storage tanks.

**3-minute oral testimony*

Sample testimony

Meeting date: 12/15/2021

Council/PH Committee: Council/public hearing

Agenda Item: Resolution 21-276

Position: Support

Aloha Chair Waters, Vice Chair Kia'āina, and Councilmembers,

As a resident of O'ahu and a water drinker, I strongly support Resolution 21-276, urging the permanent removal and relocation of the U.S. Navy Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility underground storage tanks. We simply cannot allow 80-year-old underground storage tanks that store up to 187 million gallons of fuel per day and that pose such immense threat of leaking and contaminating our environment and water supply to operate 100 feet above O'ahu's sole-source drinking water aquifer.

[Share your personal story and how you and your community have been impacted. That personal connection you feel to wanting our water protected holds a lot of weight with decision makers.]

The Red Hill facility – the fragile, antiquated fuel tanks and supporting systems – has a long history of leaking fuel into the surrounding environment and has already contaminated O'ahu's primary drinking water aquifer. Shutting down Red Hill immediately and entirely is the only way to guarantee the safety of our water and our people.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and for taking up this important measure at the council.

Sincerely,
<Your Name>