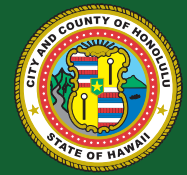


# MAYOR'S Highlights



JUNE 2024

*Rick Blangiardi*



## This Month's Highlights

- Mayor Blangiardi creates Ocean Safety department and signs resolution for a voter-approved commission
- An update on improvements to the City's critically-important 911 system
- A list of resources for Hurricane Preparedness Month, which begins in June every year
- Information about HECO's Public Safety Power Shutoff program, which begins on July 1, 2024
- How the City and County of Honolulu is helping to support the Hawai'i Foodbank

## A New Day For A New Department

Hawai'i is famous for having the best watermen and waterwomen in the world, and the lifeguards who patrol O'ahu's shorelines keep countless beachgoers safe every day. Now, following the unanimous recommendation of an independent Ocean Safety task force, those lifeguards finally have their own department.

Previously, the lifeguards from Ocean Safety and paramedics with Emergency Medical Services had been part of the same department — the Honolulu Emergency Services Department.

During a ceremony last month in front of Honolulu Hale, Mayor Rick Blangiardi signed a pair of resolutions that gave City and County lifeguards their own department while also allowing voters to determine whether a commission should provide oversight and accountability for the

leadership of the new Ocean Safety Department, similar to our fire and police departments.

"Our courageous City and County of Honolulu lifeguards race into the face of danger each and every day, and they deserve our unwavering support and appreciation, because they put their lives on the line for all of us," said Mayor Rick Blangiardi.

The signing ceremony was attended by current and former Ocean Safety employees and members of the Honolulu City Council. Councilmember Andria Tupola introduced Resolution 24-50 and was one of the strongest supporters of the new department.

"We unite with the lifeguards who have gone before, the lifeguards that are here now,

and the lifeguards that will come next," said Councilmember Tupola.

Currently, there are 271 water safety officers at Ocean Safety, comprising eight rescue ski teams and staffing 42 lifeguard towers monitoring 227 miles of coastline on O'ahu.

Our lifeguards utilize surfboards, fins and jet-skis, along with their deep understanding of the ocean and finely-honed mental and physical prowess to keep beachgoers safe.

There is still plenty of work that needs to be done administratively to separate the two departments, but our work on this has begun. We look forward to an Ocean Safety Department that fully represents the courage and heroism our lifeguards put on display every day!





# Message from the Mayor: Our 911 System

Recent newspaper editorials about the City's 911 system are absolutely right: all emergency calls to 911 must be answered.

It goes without saying that 911 needs to be a fail-proof operation. We need to make sure a system that receives nearly one million calls each year is serving the public as effectively as it possibly can — and the urgency of our improvement efforts must, and will, match the urgency with which people call 911 every day.

The Honolulu Police Department is working on several different recruiting efforts to staff up their call takers and radio dispatchers, and the department is in discussions with HGEA about the possibility of re-hiring employees who recently retired, to bolster staffing in the short-term.

HPD has also committed to redistributing the number of call takers on any given shift to increase the number of people who are available to answer emergency calls. This may result in longer wait times for non-emergency calls, but emergency calls must be the priority.

An automated callback feature for dropped 911 calls is already on the way, and the department expects to begin testing that system later this month.

Our 911 system — and our police force—are vital services that our residents and visitors can depend on. We must do whatever is needed to keep it that way.



## Hurricane Preparedness Month

June 1 marks the beginning of hurricane season in Hawai'i, so make sure your family is prepared in the event of a hurricane by taking action before a storm is on the horizon. Residents are encouraged to do three things to stay prepared: make a plan, build a kit, and be sure to keep informed.

Find out if your home is a safe place to ride out a storm — or if you need to be ready to evacuate. Have 14 days of ready-to-eat food and water, and always follow local media and official emergency management accounts to get up-to-date, accurate information.

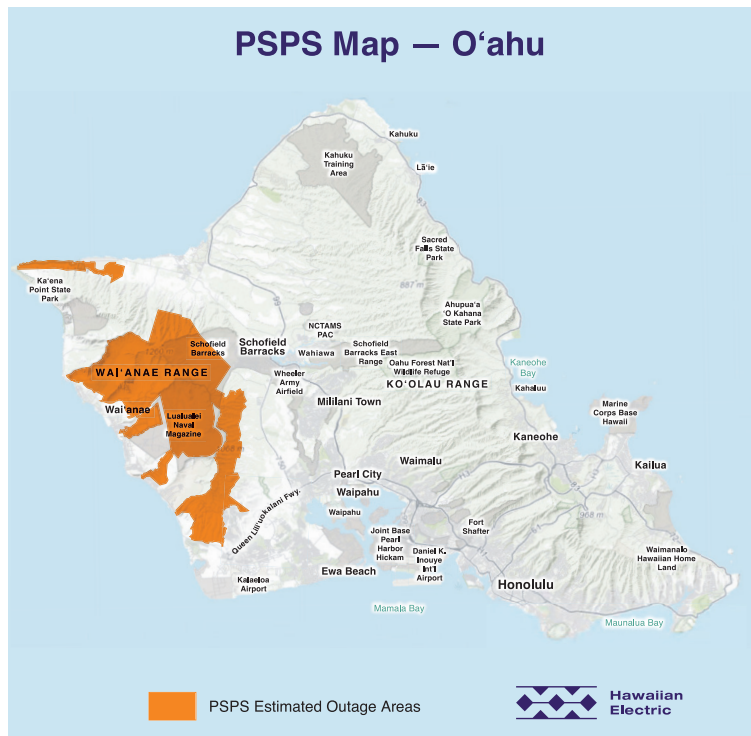
Preparedness is a kākou effort. If those of us who can prepare in advance of a hurricane remember to do so, more resources are available for emergency responders to assist those who cannot. If you are unsure of how to get started, try taking small actions first. Buy a few extra canned goods every time you shop, and add water storage containers to your emergency supply kit. Check in with friends and family to see if they have an emergency plan.

The bottom line? Do as much as you can! Learn more about hurricanes and how to be prepared before a storm comes by scanning this QR code, or visiting <http://www.honolulu.gov/dem>.



## Public Safety Power Shutoffs

Late last month, Hawaiian Electric formally announced the start of their Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) program, which is slated to begin on July 1, 2024.



As part of the program, HECO may preemptively shut off power in certain high-risk areas as a “last line of defense” to keep communities safe from wildfires. Those high-risk areas include portions of Wai'anae, Mākaha, Nānākuli, Mā'ili and Ka'ena Point.

During periods when forecast conditions (very strong wind speeds and very low humidity levels) are favorable for wildfires — especially in places that have historically higher rates of wildfires — HECO could turn off the power in some or all of those high-risk areas, and potentially with little notice. Depending on the weather conditions, the power in those areas could be out for several days, and HECO equipment must be inspected before service can be restored.

Just because the program begins on July 1 does not mean the power will necessarily go out on July 1 — it just means that if weather conditions are favorable for wildfires, that HECO could consider implementing a power shutoff as early as July 1.

The City and County of Honolulu's first responder agencies, including the Honolulu Fire Department and Honolulu Police Department, are coordinating with HECO to make sure communities stay safe during these outages.



All residents are advised to stay informed about HECO's PSPS program by scanning the QR code here:







## Honoring The Fallen (Honolulu) May 13, 2024

Behind every badge, behind every uniform, there is a story of unwavering dedication and sacrifice. During Police Week 2024, we paid tribute to our law enforcement officers, our heroes, who have died in the line of duty. We remember them with honor and affection for their courageous deeds and service to our community.



## Cutting-Edge Military Innovations (Waikiki) May 14, 2024

Mayor Blangiardi and U.S. Army Pacific Commander Gen. Charles Flynn toured the showroom at the annual LANPAC Symposium at the Sheraton Waikiki. This year, 75 vendors showcased products ranging from camouflage uniforms to missile systems for military officials from over 30 countries.

## 'Auana Arrives (Waikiki) May 15, 2024

Mayor Blangiardi, along with several performers and artists, took part in a press conference for Cirque du Soleil's first Waikiki residency. 'Auana is hyped to bring awe-inspiring performances and unforgettable experiences to our city.



## Medical Center Groundbreaking (Honolulu) May 16, 2024

Mayor Blangiardi, community members and health experts celebrated the groundbreaking and blessing ceremony of the newly-renamed Straub Benioff Medical Center. The new 700,000- square-foot campus on King Street was born out of a \$100 million donation from philanthropists Marc and Lynne Benioff.

## Outstanding Older Americans (Honolulu) May 17, 2024

Our kūpuna contribute immensely, making life in Hawai'i truly special. Mayor Blangiardi, members of the Honolulu City Council, and the City Department of Community Services' Elderly Affairs Division honored Honolulu's 2024 Outstanding Older Americans awardees during a ceremony at HMSA.



## Saluting Our Heroes (Pūowaina) May 27, 2024

Mayor Blangiardi hosted the annual Memorial Day ceremony at National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific at Pūowaina, honoring our fallen heroes. It was a solemn and heartfelt tribute to those who made the ultimate sacrifice for our nation. We remember and thank them for their service and dedication.







## Waialua Town Hall Rescheduled

Mayor Rick Blangiardi's town hall meeting at Waialua Elementary School, originally scheduled for May 16, 2024, was postponed due to severe weather. The meeting has been rescheduled for 7 p.m. on Thursday, June 20, 2024 and will still take place at Waialua Elementary School.

## Hawai'i Foodbank City and State Food Drive

A celebration was held at Honolulu Hale on May 21 to mark the culmination of the City and County of Honolulu and State of Hawai'i food drives on behalf of the Hawai'i Foodbank.

Thousands of pounds of canned food donations were loaded into a Foodbank vehicle, which was then escorted to the Foodbank warehouse by a convoy of City and State vehicles, symbolic of the City and State's unified effort to provide support to the Foodbank and to the people who rely on it for meals.

Honolulu City Council members joined dozens of City and State workers to create a human chain, passing boxes of food to one another so it could be loaded into the vehicles. The Royal Hawaiian Band performed during the event, adding an air of festivity to Honolulu Hale as the food was loaded into vehicles and as the convoy departed.

The City relaunched its food drive this spring for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic, demonstrating its commitment to helping address the serious and pervasive issue of hunger within our communities.



The City and State food drives are over, but the need continues. Please consider donating to the Hawai'i Foodbank by scanning the QR code or going to [hawaiifoodbank.org](http://hawaiifoodbank.org).



## Report An Issue

Have an issue in your community? Report anything, from potholes to graffiti, using the City's 311 program — available now via mobile app or <http://honoluluhi.citysourced.com>



## Sign Up For City Updates

**HNL.info** is your one-stop shop for updates from the City! Sign up today to receive emergency alerts, service notifications and information about registering for City activities.



## Get In Touch Today!

**Mayor's Office**  
[honolulu.gov/mayor](http://honolulu.gov/mayor)  
(808) 768-4141

**Satellite City Halls**  
[honolulu.gov/csd](http://honolulu.gov/csd)  
(808) 768-4325

**Trash Pick-Up Service**  
[honolulu.gov/env](http://honolulu.gov/env)  
(808) 768-3486

**Golf Course & Zoo Information**  
[honolulu.gov/des](http://honolulu.gov/des)  
(808) 768-5400

**Parks and Recreation**  
[honolulu.gov/parks](http://honolulu.gov/parks)  
(808) 768-3003

**Neighborhood Boards**  
[honolulu.gov/nco](http://honolulu.gov/nco)  
(808) 768-3710