



Navy Closure Task Force-Red Hill  
**Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam**

**MEDIA RELEASE**

July 11, 2024

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**Navy Closure Task Force-Red Hill Operational Update**  
*July 2024*

**JOINT BASE PEARL HARBOR-HICKAM, Hawaii** –Navy Closure Task Force-Red Hill (NCTF-RH) made significant advances in the process to close the Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility (RHBFSS) this month.

Workers completed the initial venting, or degassing phase, and sludge removal on tanks 8 and 7, and installed lighting and started the engineer assessments of scaffolding in support of future cleaning and power washing operations. The NCTF-RH team also submitted the Supplement 3 closure plan to regulators and participated in various engagements with community stakeholders.

**Tank 8 and 7 Cleaning Efforts:** Navy contractors completed initial venting, or degassing phase, of tanks 8 and 7 sooner than anticipated with no increases of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) above 1 part per million by volume (ppmv) in the air quality around the facility, well under the regulatory standard limit of 38 ppmv. After the initial venting was finished, the tanks were certified safe to enter by a marine chemist before Navy personnel and contractors opened the personnel entryways and began the work of installing lighting and equipment required for sludge removal and cleaning. The Navy established a call center for any community questions or concerns and reported air quality measurements to the NCTF-RH app and website, so community members can remain informed on any changes to the air and environment.

**Sludge Removal:** Sludge removal at tank 8 was completed June 28, and on July 8 for tank 7. Approximately 37 gallons of sludge was extracted from both tanks. Sludge is removed by lowering personnel to the bottom of the tank where it is manually shoveled out and put into drums. The drums are sealed and sent off island for disposal at a permitted waste disposal facility on the continental U.S. Joint Task Force-Red Hill estimated about 2,000 gallons of sludge was in each of the 14 tanks that require cleaning based upon historic cleaning activities. Initial NCTF-RH activities in tanks 7 and 8 indicate there's less sludge than initially estimated. Actual amounts will vary per tank and will be unknown until crews access the tanks to begin work.

**Red Hill Tank Closure Plan Supplement 3**: NCTF-RH submitted Red Hill Tank Closure Plan Supplement 3 to the Environmental Protection Agency and the Hawaii Department of Health on June 28, for a 45-day review period. Supplement 3 builds upon previous RHBFSF closure plan submissions and includes a revised integrated master schedule, facility closure updates, and the Closure Site Assessment Work Plan. A site assessment work plan is required by Hawaii underground storage tank regulations prior to the closure of any underground fuel storage tank system in Hawaii and is a foundational effort of the Navy's environmental remediation efforts at RHBFSF.

**Community Engagements**: NCTF-RH leaders continued to meet with stakeholders across the community. This month leaders spoke at meetings with the [Military Affairs Council](#), [Society of American Military Engineers Honolulu Post](#) and the [Honolulu Local Emergency Planning Committee](#), as well as other informal meetings with community leaders, residents and other interested parties.

NCTF-RH will host the next Open House at the Moanalua Community Center on Aug. 21, 5-7 p.m. Similar to the most recent event held in May, the Open House will feature stations about the command and RHBFSF closure process and provide attendees an opportunity to meet staff and ask questions.

"I am pleased with the progress the team has made with the start of tank cleaning. We are moving with urgency, but at the speed of safety," said Rear Adm. Marc Williams, deputy commander, NCTF-RH. "Venting of tanks 8 and 7 finished sooner than anticipated and without impact on the air quality around the facility. The core of the cleaning process begins with the removal of sludge and inspecting infrastructure needed to clean inside the tanks. We look forward to collaborating with the regulators on our Supplement 3, which will enable us to build out our plan to move the ball further down the field towards our goal of closure in the coming years."

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NCTF-RH is committed to working with all government agencies and community stakeholders to safely and deliberately close the Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility underground storage tanks and associated piping system, conduct long-term environmental remediation, and ensure continued access to safe drinking water in compliance with all Federal, State, and local laws, policies and regulations.

For more information about NCTF-RH, visit <https://www.navyclosuretaskforce.navy.mil/> or download our free mobile app by searching for "NCTF-Red Hill" in the Apple App store or Google Play store. For imagery, video and other digital media please visit our DVIDS site here: <https://www.dvidshub.net/unit/NCTF-RH>.

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