

To: Mayor Michael Victorino

Copies to: Jeff Pearson, Sandy Baz, Ipo Mossman, Herman Andaya, Lynn DeCoite, Kyle Yamashita, Alice Lee, Keani Rawlins, Tasha Kama, Gabe Johnson, Kelly King, Mike Molina, Tamara Paltin, Shane Sinenci, Yuki Lei Sugimura

From: Kula Community Association Board

The Kula Community continues to experience unacceptable water quality due to the Kona Low Storms in the beginning of December. Undrinkable water is a serious public health concern. While some service interruption is understandable from a storm situation, this lack of safe water has been going on for over a month now, with erratic and confusing communication from the Department of Water Supply (DWS). Our community needs more detailed information on what is being done to speedily remedy the situation and what is being done to prevent a similar outage in the future. Is there a communication procedure in place that could be followed for all emergencies and how can the Kula Community Association help disperse information?

Specific areas of concern include:

- 1) In this emergency situation the initial communication via a press release from the DWS regarding the loss of water and the need to boil water did not reach most of those affected. Consequently, many were drinking water that was below EPA standards. Then we were informed the water was okay. Then the press release reversed that saying to continue to boil water but further down in the same press release stated that if service was not lost the water was okay. Then that changed and some additional residents learned they did need to boil water. Calls to the number in the press release and emails have gone unanswered or when answered just repeated what was in the press release. It was impossible to get clear information. Our Department of Health did not know what to tell us. In an emergency situation, the community requires timely, frequent, comprehensive and accurate information that is not transmitted only by press releases. If it is not safe to drink the water, we cannot rely on people reading a limited circulation paper to find this out. This is especially true when dealing with such lethal organisms as E. Coli.
- 2) Status of our Upper Kula system: We have seen photos of damaged pipes which reach across gulches being repaired with pipes again going across gulches and inadequately supported for the new sections. We do not know what condition our system is in, or how likely another storm will again cause unacceptable water outages. We need to know more so we can understand our situation and what it will take to improve the system.
- 3) In the most recent (1/11/2022) information on the DWS website, it is stated that starting 1/10/2022, chlorine will be used to try to decontaminate a number of areas that are under a boil water advisory instead of chloramine. Why did it take two weeks to make the switch?

The Kula Community Association would like to work with the County to get a better understanding of what is happening and how to prevent a similar situation in the future. Given the increasing severity of adverse weather events from global warming, our next storm may be even worse. We would like to work with you to address the serious concerns we have regarding how such an emergency is handled in the future, and how our communication needs will be met. More urgently, we need to know the facts about the inability of the Department of Water Supply to deliver safe drinking water to all families in Kula.

Please contact Heather Mueller, President of the Kula Community Association, to arrange a discussion with the Kula Association Board at your earliest convenience. Email: heathermaymueller@yahoo.com. Phone: 808-446-3545 or 808-430-0120

Respectively submitted by:
Douglas Sheehan, Secretary
Kula Community Association Board

Kula Community Association Board

India Brassingram, James Caldwell, Charles Carletta, Karsten Dueck, Barbara Fernandez, Andrew Ho, Dick Mayer, Heather Mueller, Bobbie Patnode, Doug Sheehan, Michael Tengan, Michael Williams, John J. Wilson, Sean Wilson