

 <p>SIERRA CLUB FOUNDED 1892</p>	<p>Hawai'i Chapter Maui Group</p>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home Announcements Newsletter Hikes & Activities Issues Petitions About Us Contact Us Join Our Email List Links Join the Sierra Club Donate Mahalo Hawai'i Chapter National Sierra Club 	 <p>High Levels of radiation found downwind of Pohakuloa Gunnery Range, Big Island, Hawaii</p> 				
	<p>CHAIR'S REPORT JUNE 1, 2007 BY LANCE HOLTER</p> <p>On April 29, 2007 KITV News reporter Dick Allgire reported high levels of radiation 30 miles downwind of Pohakuloa Gunnery Range on the Big Island. These readings were taken April 22 while Stryker Maneuvers were being conducted at the range.</p> <p>Normal background levels range in the 10 to 20 counts per minute range but on that day eyewitnesses reported radiation readings as high as 93 counts per minute that were seen and reported. Following is the KITV news story:</p> <p>"Some activists are claiming the U-S Army is firing depleted uranium on gunnery ranges in Hawaii ... and that it's contaminating the state with radioactive fallout.</p> <p>The U-S Army denies using these types of rounds when it practices in Hawaii. But as KITV 4's Dick Allgire reports... those raising the allegations claim they have proof.</p> <p>Leuren Moret is a world-renowned expert on the subject of depleted uranium. She travels the globe giving presentations about the dangers of spreading nano particles of radioactive uranium through bombs and bullets.</p> <p>(Leuren Moret) IT'S NOT HARMLESS IT'S EXTREMELY TOXIC. (Allgire) On April 22nd she took Geiger counter readings in South Kona on the Big Island.</p> <p>(Moret) THAT SOUND "57(CPM). IT'S GETTING HIGHER." (Allgire) Normal background radiation would be 5 to 20 counts per minute. On this day she took readings of up to 93, which experts say is abnormal and quite high. (Moret) THAT IS HORRENDOUS AND IT COULD ONLY BE BECAUSE THEY WERE DOING LIVE FIRE WITH DEPLETED URANIUM AT POHAKULOA WHILE WE WERE DOING THE MEASUREMENTS. (Allgire) Leuren Moret claims the Army is using depleted uranium on the Pohakuloa firing range, and the wind is blowing it over South Kona.</p> <p>The army insists it does not use depleted uranium in Hawaii. Dr. Lorrin Pang is a public health official in Hawaii, but in this interview says he is speaking only as a concerned physician.</p> <p>(Dr.Lorrin Pang) REGARDLESS OF WHAT IT'S FROM IT IS HIGH. IT HAS TO BE LOOKED AT. FURTHERMORE SHE WENT AROUND THE TRAINING AREA AND I GUESS IT WAS HIGH DOWNWIND OF THE RANGE WHICH IS KIND OF LIKE A SMOKING GUN. (Moret) ALL OF THE BOMBING AND GUNNERY RANGES ARE CONTAMINATED IN HAWAII WITH DEPLETED URANIUM ALREADY." Dan Meisenzahl, KITV 4, tele 808-535-0457 , danm@kitvcom</p>				
<p>© Copyright 2005 Sierra Club</p>	<p>Depleted Uranium is used as armor piercing projectiles and in bunker busting munitions. It is composed of Uranium 238 a left over waste material from nuclear power reactors and nuclear weapons construction. There are hundreds of thousands of tons of U238 in storage in the United States alone. DU munitions are used during combat because they are extremely effective.</p> <p>However, in winning these battles through use of uranium munitions we have contaminated air, water and soil. Consequently, children, women, and men have inhaled, ingested or had wounds contaminated with U238. When used as armor piercing projectiles, DU munitions explode, burst into flames and vaporize spreading radioactive micron sized particles, gases and oxides for miles. When internalized these compounds remain in the human body for decades. Their toxicity is non-debatable and is confirmed by the Department of Defense. The radioactivity can cause scarring/fibrosis and</p>				

genetic mutations leading to cancers, infertility and birth defects. It is estimated that at least 1,000 tons of DU munitions have been used during Gulf Wars I and II plus 300 tons in Afghanistan.

Depleted Uranium weaponry was found at a Schofield Barracks target range in 2005. In an email obtained by request thru the Freedom of Information Act, the United States Army Huntsville, Alabama wrote to an Army employee involved with preparations for the Stryker brigade at Schofield Barracks stating "We have found much that we did not expect, including the recent find of depleted uranium."

Hawaii Health officer Dr. Lorrin Pang (US Army Medical Corps retired) testifying as a citizen before the 2007 Hawaii Senate said this about Depleted Uranium:

The health effects of depleted uranium (DU) weaponry are complex and at best unknown. When DU is fired at high velocity the metal burns when traveling and on impact with metal targets. The explosive burning is at very high temperatures creating a variety of chemical compounds as well as elemental metal particles. In general the heavier metal particles settled quickly around the target zone but the finer, lighter uranium oxides (produced by burning) and molecular uranium nanoparticles can become airborne and travel for miles from the site. These compounds can be inhaled by those exposed to the plume. During site clean-up settled particles can again become airborne. The binding to soil components and leaching into ground water is complex and not well understood.

While all the uranium compounds share a common risk of uranium radiation, each compound also has specific toxicity, distribution, metabolism and clearance within the body depending on its chemical composition and size. Inhaled uranium oxides can bind to the lung for years while nanosized particles can penetrate and affect many tissues on a cellular level. While alpha particles are relatively safe outside of the body (lack of penetrating power) when internalized they are the most dangerous form of radiation.

Recently (5/29/07) during Senator Daniel Inouye's inauguration ceremonies for the new Saddle Road improvements at Pohakuloa, Big Island, activists measured radiation levels at 45 CPM when normal background should be at 5-20 CPM. At least twice normal!

Last month I wrote to the State Health Departments Radiation Branch inspector Russell Takata in Honolulu asking that radiation testing begin immediately on all military bases in Hawaii. Yet Mr. Takata claims that on-base testing is impossible for lack of Stat jurisdiction. It is a military matter Takata says. Two front page news stories were published (May 11 and May 14) in the Honolulu Advertiser about Depleted Uranium with the Army admitting they may have used DU at Pohakuloa and an Advertiser editorial (Ma16) supporting the public's right to know that in the interest of public safety testing on bases will proceed. As a result the Army has indicated it will begin testing sometime this summer. The question is will the military tell the public what really is found there on the bases? What about the military bombing on Kahoolawe?

ACTION: You can help by calling Russell Takata, Hawaii Department of Health, Honolulu **808-586-4700** and ask that radiation testing on military bases be done immediately and that the US military must conform to State and County health laws. For more information on DU go to our web site www.NoDUhawaii.com

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