



## NEWS RELEASE

DEPARTMENT OF WATER, COUNTY OF KAUA'I

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### **EPA WaterSense selects DOW for Excellence Award two years in a row**

LIHUE – The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has recognized the Department of Water (DOW) with a 2022 WaterSense Excellence Award for their dedication to helping consumers and businesses save water through conservation awareness and educational outreach. DOW received the award during a ceremony at WaterSmart Innovations (WSI) Conference and Exposition in Las Vegas, held on October 6, 2022.

“What an honor to receive the EPA Excellence Award two years in a row!” said Joe Tait, DOW’s Manager and Chief Engineer. “The success of our educational programs begins with the long-standing support of our Board of Directors and is driven by our team of dedicated Department of Water employees who continue to increase our outreach efforts each year. We are humbled and grateful to again bring this national award back to the County of Kaua’i and for all of Hawai’i.”

WaterSense, a voluntary partnership program sponsored by EPA, is both a label for water-efficient products, programs, and homes and a resource for helping consumers learn ways to save water. Since 2006, more than 2,100 WaterSense partners and over 40,000 models of certified water-efficient plumbing and irrigation products have helped consumers and businesses save 6.4 trillion gallons of water—enough water to supply all households in the United States with water for eight months. In addition to water savings, WaterSense has helped reduce the amount of energy needed to pump, treat, and heat water by 754 billion kilowatt hours and helped consumers save \$135 billion in water and energy bills.

“Throughout 2021, our award-winning partners helped people protect this precious resource by promoting WaterSense labeled products and water-efficient behaviors,” said Veronica Blette, Chief, WaterSense Branch. “Saving water is particularly critical in areas impacted by drought but is also a path to helping consumers stretch dollars by reducing their water and energy bills.”

The EPA program highlighted DOW’s community outreach and educational efforts that included the department’s water education activities and “Wise Water Wednesday” media campaign. In lieu of the in-person interactive water festival; “make a splash”, DOW brought the festival to Kauai’ fifth grade students by distributing more than 550 water education kits and conservation tools that students could do in class or at home. Their staff coordinated Project WET (Water Education Today) workshops, certifying eight new facilitators to lead water education workshops across the state. As part of its conservation program, DOW also produced a “Wise Water Wednesday” media campaign providing weekly water-saving tips and water service updates via Facebook, newspaper advertisements and radio announcements. The advertisements also included the promotion of EPA’s WaterSense labeled fixtures and appliances. DOW hosted EPA’s annual “Fix a

Leak Week” campaign and in 2021 added their “Your Better Bathroom” campaign to encourage consumers to replace old fixtures with WaterSense labeled models to save water at the tap.

For more information about EPA’s WaterSense program, visit [www.epa.gov/watersense](http://www.epa.gov/watersense).

To learn more about DOW’s education and conservation programs, call the Department of Water at 808-245-5461 or email [publicrelations@kauaiwater.org](mailto:publicrelations@kauaiwater.org).



Photo 1: (Left to right) DOW Manager and Chief Engineer, Joe Tait with DOW’s Jonell Kaohelauli’i and Wayne Takabayashi at the EPA WaterSense awards ceremony.



Photo 2: Group photo at the EPA WaterSense awards ceremony held during the WaterSmart Innovations Conference and Expo on Oct. 6, 2022.

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