



Water Quality Around Your Home

Introduction to the HAPPI-Home Series

Over 90 percent of Hawaii residents depend on groundwater for their water needs. Although few serious problems have been reported, pollution is a threat to our drinking water supplies. Pollution also affects surface waters including streams, rivers, and coastal areas used for recreation, wildlife habitat, and irrigation. You can help protect Hawaii's water resources by learning to recognize potential sources of pollution and by reducing or eliminating them. The box below contains definitions of some terms used in this worksheet and others in the HAPPI-Home series.

Pollution

Anything placed in the environment that reduces the ability of that environment to support the organisms that live there or to be used for a desired purpose.

Non-point source (NPS) pollution

Pollution that does not come from a source that can be identified easily. An example of NPS pollution is sediment (soil) in a stream. It could have come from almost any location in the stream's watershed, including fields along the stream, roadcuts, and other disturbed areas, or the stream bank itself.

Water quality

The suitability of water for a given use or uses. For example: water in a stream may be of high quality for recreation but not of high quality for drinking.

This is the first in a set of 16 informational worksheets developed by the HAPPI program (Hawaii's Pollution Prevention Information) to address water-pollution issues. Because every publication in this series may not apply to your situation, the questions on page 2 will help you choose the ones you need. Each HAPPI worksheet provides additional information on a specific topic, helps you assess your water pollution risks, and helps you develop an action plan to reduce those risks.

Drawing a map will help you visualize the layout of your property and your management practices. Information from your map may help you better determine which HAPPI project materials will be useful to you. HAPPI-Home 2, *Mapping your house and yard*, will help you to make a map of your property.

Choosing the appropriate HAPPI materials

Everyone should look at the following four HAPPI documents:

HAPPI-Home 3—*Reducing pollution risks from your trash*

HAPPI-Home 4—*Managing hazardous household products*

HAPPI-Home 5—*Think before you dump it: safe disposal of hazardous products*

HAPPI-Home 6—*Alternatives to hazardous household products*

To find out which other HAPPI-Home materials you need, answer the questions on the next page.



This HAPPI document was adapted by Michael Robotham, Carl Evensen, and Linda J. Cox from materials produced by the National Farm•A•Syst/Home•A•Syst program staff, Gary Jackson, Coordinator, Madison, Wisconsin. HAPPI-Home materials are produced by the Hawaii's Pollution Prevention Information (HAPPI) project (Farm•A•Syst / Home•A•Syst for Hawaii) of the University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (UH-CTAHR) and the USDA Cooperative Extension Service (USDA-CES). Funding for the program is provided by a US EPA 319(h) grant administered by the Hawaii State Department of Health.

Answer the following questions and refer to the HAPPI documents indicated

1. Was your house or apartment built before 1980? HAPPI-Home 7, *Lead in and around the home*
- 2a. Does your house or apartment have air conditioning or combustion appliances (gas stove, etc.)?
OR
- 2b. Does a member of your family have allergies? HAPPI-Home 8, *Indoor air quality*
3. Do you have municipal water service? If yes, skip to question 6.
If no, answer the questions below:
4. Do you have a drinking water well? HAPPI-Home 9, *Drinking water wells*
5. Do you have a water catchment system? HAPPI-Home 10, *Rainwater catchment systems*
6. Do you have a household septic system or cesspool? HAPPI-Home 11, *Household wastewater treatment systems*
- 7a. Do you have a lawn, garden or landscaped areas on your property?
OR
- 7b. Do you have a community garden plot? HAPPI-Home yard and garden set:
HH-12, *Runoff control in your yard and garden*
HH-13, *Yard and garden nutrient management*
HH-14, *Yard and garden pest management*
8. Do you own a car, truck, motorcycle, or moped? HAPPI-Home 15, *Motor vehicle maintenance*
9. Do you own a pet? HAPPI-Home 16, *Pet waste management*
10. Do you grow commercial crops such as fruits, vegetables, or flowers on your property? HAPPI-Farm 1, *Water quality on your farm*

For more information

HAPPI materials do not cover all potential risks that could affect the quality of water and other natural resources. They are designed to create an awareness of potential risks to water quality and other natural resources and to provide voluntary solutions to reduce pollution risks.

If you have questions about protecting your water and other natural resources, contact the HAPPI Program

at the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Management, University of Hawaii at Manoa, 1910 East-West Road, Honolulu, HI 96822, phone (808) 956-2617 or (808) 956-8825, e-mail <wq@ctahr.hawaii.edu>; you can also contact your local Cooperative Extension Service office or the Clean Water Branch of the Hawaii Department of Health.