

Water contamination found at WCC building

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KANEOHE — Traces of coliform bacteria were found on two occasions last month in a water system that supplies drinking water to a Windward Community College building.

No illnesses were reported as a result of the contamination at the school's Eckerdt Building and the coliform levels did not

pose a health risk, said state Health Department spokesman Pat Johnston.

Federal Environmental Protection Agency drinking water standards do not allow more than one sample per month showing presence of the contaminant. The coliform was found in samples taken Nov. 12 and 25 by the state Department of Health's Clean Water branch.

The building draws its water

from the Hawaii State Hospital system. Tests on the rest of the system showed no problems, and this was the first time coliform had been detected in the system, Johnston said.

The presence of coliform is a concern because it indicates that a disease-causing substance, such as fecal matter, is able to enter the water system, he said. Disease symptoms include diarrhea, cramps, nausea and possi-

ble jaundice.

Health officials could not pinpoint the source of the contamination, but Johnston said recent heavy rains and construction in the area may have caused some leaching into the water system.

The hospital flushed out the pipes leading to Eckerdt and increased the amount of chlorine in the water well. Samples taken after these measures showed no signs of coliform.