



*National Weather Service  
Employees Organization*

## **National Weather Service to Evict Employees from Housing at Tsunami Center; Inspector General Complaint Filed**

(November 14, 2013) The National Weather Service is facing allegations of “waste, fraud and abuse” over the eviction of Pacific Tsunami Warning Center employees from their government housing. The complaint, filed with the Inspector General of the U.S. Department of Commerce, alleges that the NWS, which operates the PTWC, will unnecessarily lose more than \$82,000 a year in income that employees pay in rent. The complaint was filed by the National Weather Service Employees Organization, the union that represents NWS employees nationwide, including the scientists at the PTWC.

“This was our home for 16 years. It’s heartbreaking, and frankly demoralizing, to know that instead of allowing us to continue to pay rent as we always have, after all of our years of service to the NWS, our homes will now become a vacant waste of taxpayer dollars.” said Barry Hirshorn, a geophysicist at the PTWC and NWSEO member.

The NWS owns four housing units at the PTWC at Ewa Beach that it has rented to employees for years. The NWS plans to relocate the operations of the Center to a new facility on Ford Island early next year. The NWS originally entered into an agreement with NWSEO that would allow employees to remain in their homes after the move, provided they continue to pay rent to the agency.

In July, the NWS informed the union that it was renegeing on this agreement and employees would be evicted from their homes on April 1, 2014. “From a legal perspective, this absurd,” said NWSEO General Counsel Richard Hirn. “Rather than spending appropriated funds to pay for the employees’ housing, the NWS is actually making a profit from the rental of those housing units. The employees’ rent actually helps fund agency operations.”

The Offices of Senators Schatz and Hirono attempted to intercede on behalf of NWSEO and its members to resolve this situation, but, to date, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NWS's parent agency) has refused to reconsider its position.

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Contact:

Barry Hirshorn  
NWSEO Pacific Region Chair/PTWC Geophysicist  
Phone: 808-554-4265

Richard Hirn  
NWSEO General Counsel  
Phone: 202-274-1812