



**DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE**  
*KA 'OIHANA PILI KAUA*

**OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**

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**HI-EMA CELEBRATES HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE WITH MAHINA 'ŌLELO  
HAWAI'I IN FEBRUARY**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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HONOLULU – The beautiful and vibrant Hawaiian language is being celebrated throughout the month of February in Hawai'i. Hawaiian Word of the Day - Celebrating Mahina 'Ōlelo Hawai'i, is a special project initiated by the Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency (HI-EMA), which aims to promote and preserve the rich heritage of the Hawaiian language while emphasizing its relevance to emergency preparedness.

Administrator James Barros, highlights the importance of raising awareness about the responsibility of being prepared for emergencies. "We want to ensure that our kama'āina and visitors understand the significance of readiness for any emergency," said Barros. "Through Mahina 'Ōlelo Hawai'i, we have carefully chosen Hawaiian words that highlight awareness and preparedness."

Since February 1, HI-EMA has been running the Hawaiian Word of the Day campaign on its official Twitter account ([@Hi\\_EMA](https://twitter.com/Hi_EMA)), Facebook page ([facebook.com/HawaiiEma](https://facebook.com/HawaiiEma)), and the HI-EMA website ([www.ready.hawaii.gov](http://www.ready.hawaii.gov)). This campaign aims to educate the public about essential words that everyone should be familiar with in case of an emergency. The staff of HI-EMA actively participates in this initiative, demonstrating its commitment to the well-being of the community.

The featured words so far have included “kuleana,” shared by Jacob Bateman, which signifies responding to, mitigating, and recovering from disasters and emergencies. “Hānaiāhuhu,” spokesdog Gimli’s feature, focuses on pet preparedness. “Last Thursday, Neia Gardner defined “ōlai,” meaning earthquake,” Barros added. “Coincidentally, on Friday, a 5.7 magnitude earthquake struck the Big Island, emphasizing the immediate nature of preparedness. Emergencies can occur unexpectedly, and we must always be ready.”

The Mahina ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i campaign will continue throughout February, with HI-EMA inviting the public to access the daily word on Twitter or Facebook. Visit [ready.hawaii.gov](http://ready.hawaii.gov) to explore the series. HI-EMA encourages everyone to share the proud heritage of the Hawaiian language with friends and family.

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