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STAR BULLETIN

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2,400-man army begins Iniki cleanup

□ The team will scour the island to pick up debris the storm left

By Lester Chang

Kauai correspondent

LIHUE — More than 2,400 Army soldiers, Marines and Hawaii National Guardsmen today began a massive islandwide cleanup of debris left by Hurricane Iniki.

Under "Operation Garden Sweep," small crews of military and civilian workers will scour neighborhoods and remove garbage, dead trees, metal scraps, building material and rubble over the next week, said Brig. Gen. Eugene Imai, commander of the Army National Guard.

The debris will be dumped temporarily at five sites approved by the state Department of Health and disposed of later, Imai said.

The green waste will be grinded, the metal scraps compacted and some rubble salvaged, he said.

Relief officials worry that uncollected garbage and debris could cause health hazards.

Kauai County officials insisted only household trash be dumped at the Kekaha Landfill, the island's last landfill.

For the cleanup, at least 100 five-ton cargo trucks, troop carriers, forklifts, bucket loaders and other heavy equipment will be used, said Brig. Gen. Ralph Locurcio, commander and division engineer with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

The troops are from the 27th Infantry Division on Oahu and Marines from Kaneohe Marine Corps Air Station. These troops are in addition to 2,300 National Guardsman and Army troops already on the island and helping with relief.