

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Inouye Regional Center

■ Honoring the late Sen. Daniel Inouye, the NOAA Inouye Regional Center is the largest NOAA facility ever built. It was opened recently on Ford Island in the Pearl Harbor Navy Base. Before NOAA built the center, NOAA's Honolulu rent was \$3 million per year. Originally estimated to cost \$250 million, but totaling \$331 million, the new center is located on 35 acres and has 310,000 square feet of labs and offices. More than 700 employees will work there. President Obama's federal stimulus package provided \$153 million of the price tag.

Five existing buildings were also renovated for the center. The campuslike center's main office houses a museum and visitor center. There is a fitness center, a cafeteria, and lockers for bicycles. Pumped seawater cools the facility, native plants capture rainwater, and solar cells power the center. A visitor to the facility told reporters, "This is something you'd more likely see at Google or Silicon Valley, not a federal facility."

The labs include two necropsy rooms to study dead seals, turtles, whales and monk seals. The Pacific Tsunami Center will relocate there and be housed on the wave-safe top floor. Also finding homes at the Inouye Center are the National Environmental Satellite, Data, Information Service, National Weather Service, Human Resources and Acquisitions, National Marine Fisheries Service Pacific Islands Regional Office, and National Ocean Service.

Splash!

by Bob Duerr

