

5-days mtg. 1/30/18

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Guam EPA prepares for islandwide radon testing

By Alana Chargualaf
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The Guam Environmental Protection Agency is a step closer to helping residents measure the levels of carcinogenic radon in their buildings after the agency announced the completion of its radon lab during a press conference yesterday in Adelup. A proclamation was signed in celebration and recognition of January being named Radon Action Month.

Radon is a radioactive, colorless, odorless and tasteless carcinogenic gas, and is the second-leading cause of lung cancer in the United States, after smoking tobacco. According to the Surgeon General's Office and the U.S. EPA, as many as 24,000 lung cancer deaths are caused by radon each year.

Radon is released through the natural decay of radioactive elements found in rocks and soil, and can seep into homes and buildings through cracks in their structure. The only way to identify the levels of radon in a building is to test it at least once every five years.

The U.S. EPA's radon action level is 4 pCi/L (picocuries per liter of air). In 2009, Guam EPA's radon exposure survey revealed one-third of Guam's structures tested above the recommended action level. Moreover, nearly two-thirds of the island's population lives in areas that exceed the radon action level. The northern half of Guam, which is made up of limestone, is the most densely populated part of the island.

Individuals can lessen their exposure to radon by sealing cracks in the walls of their homes or business



PROCLAMATION SIGNING: Lt. Gov. Ray Tenorio, center left, and Bob Perron, center right, board chairman of the Guam Environmental Protection Agency, are pictured after the signing of a proclamation declaring January as Radon Action Month. David Castro/The Guam Daily Post

buildings, or by putting pipes under their building slabs to draw air out with a fan and an external vent.

Radon testing kits

The new radon lab was completed last Friday. Radon testing kits for residents are being prepared for distribution as soon as the lab opens, anywhere with two weeks to a month, according to Roland Gutierrez, the air pollution control program manager at Guam EPA. The lab is currently going through a performance test for certification. The agency expects to receive results by today.

Guam EPA currently has 200 charcoal canisters to absorb the radon for testing and is in the process of ordering more. Before the agency can distribute the cans, they must be baked for 24 hours. Its current oven can hold up to 50 cans at a time.

In the free testing kit, residents

will receive the cans, along with an instruction sheet on how to deploy the can. Residents must open the can and expose it to the testing area for 48 hours, then close it and return it to Guam EPA to read the amount of radon decay. If the reading exceeds 4 pCi/L, the agency will recommend mitigation for the home or business.

"Radon is a naturally occurring gas that we can't change. It's something that Mother Nature has given us, whether we like it or not," said Guam EPA Administrator Walter Leon Guerrero. "We are doing this monitoring to ensure people's health, and we are working with U.S. EPA to try to expand our current radon program."

Leon Guerrero hopes to incorporate a revolving loan fund in the future to receive more funding to defer the cost residents would have to pay to mitigate radon, instead of spending their

“We are doing this monitoring to ensure people's health, and we are working with U.S. EPA to try to expand our current radon program.”

- Walter Leon Guerrero, administrator, Guam Environmental Protection Agency

own money.

Radon testing efforts are funded by a \$100,000 grant from the U.S. EPA. The funds also support the lab, as well as training for its staff.

Musical producer seeking 'fearless' cast for 'Shrek'

By Andrew Roberto
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Ernest Ochoco, musical theatre

extraordinaire, wants the most magical performers on Guam to audition for a production of "Shrek the Musical" from Jan. 24 to 25.

"I need someone who is fearless, who's ready to be able to let it all hang out and let loose," Ochoco said of the types of actors he wants

in his roles. "Be crazy."

The familiar tale of the big green ogre's journey to rescue a princess and save his swamp gets new and exciting twists in this Broadway retelling of the big-screen movie.

Fan favorites including the titular Shrek, Donkey, Fiona, Magic Mirror

and others all make an appearance.

Ochoco told The Guam Daily Post that interested actors may audition in Room 201 of Tiyán High School on Jan. 24 and 25, beginning at 4 p.m.

For any inquiries, contact Ochoco at 487-3767.

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GUAM EDUCATION BOARD
Special Meeting
Friday, January 20, 2018
6 pm
Superintendent's Conference Room, Building A, Tiyán

AGENDA

- I. Meeting Call to Order
- II. Roll Call of Members
- III. Unfinished Business
 1. Ad Hoc Committee on Board Matters
 2. SY 2018-2019 and SY 2019-2020 Calendars
- IV. New Business
 1. Approval for FY 19 Budget
- V. Executive Session
- VI. Adjournment

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PUBLIC NOTICE

For: **Regular Board Meeting**
Date: **Friday, January 26, 2018**
Time: **12:00 noon**

Place: **GGRF Conference Room**
Agenda will be made available prior to the meeting. For individuals requiring special accommodations, please contact 475-8900/01.

/s/ Paula M. Blas, Director

This ad is paid with government funds by GGRF.

GUAM BOARD OF EXAMINERS FOR OPTOMETRY

Regular Session Meeting, Tuesday, January 30, at 8:30 AM at the Terlaje Professional Building, 194 Hernan Cortez Avenue, 2nd Floor, Suite 209 Health Professional Licensing Office Board Conference Room, Hagatna, Guam.

For more information please contact the Board office at 735-7405 thru 12. Persons with disabilities needing special accommodations may call Jimmy Slan at 735-7172 or the telecommunication device for the Hearing/Speech Impaired (TDD) at 649-1801. Executive meeting may be called if necessary.

2-day m/f 1/30/18

THE GUAM DAILY
POST

READ

Commission approves solar facility application

Concerns linger over endangered species at project site

By **Louella Losinio**
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The Hybrid Guam Land Use Commission approved a zone-variance application for a renewable energy facility in the Sasayan Valley during a meeting yesterday despite cultural, environmental and safety concerns raised by members of the community.

The Guam Power Authority plans to buy solar power from an investment partnership between Korea Electric Power Corp., South Korea's state-run power company, and a subsidiary of electronics and appliance giant LG CNS. The investors' partnership, called KEPCO-LG CNS Consortium, is expected to build two 30-megawatt solar power plants in the area.

KEPCO-LG submitted a conditional-use application with the hybrid commission.

G. Curt Fiedler, associate professor of biology at the University of Guam, said a population of very rare snails - the fragile tree snail (*Samoana fragilis*) - inhabits the area near the proposed facility. According to Fiedler, the snails

are protected by the Endangered Species Act.

"There are only four or five other populations on Guam of these snails, and none of those populations are any more than 100 individuals, from what I can tell," he said during the hearing.

Fiedler, who specializes in endangered species, said a host plant for the Mariana eight-spot butterfly (*Hypolimnas octocula marianensis*) was also identified near the area.

He said studies indicate that the air temperature around a solar farm increases by several degrees. The temperature changes could dry out the adjacent areas, according to Fiedler.

"It could change the moisture profile and impact some of the native organisms in the surrounding forests," he said. "My concern is that the impact of the power plant does not negatively affect those native species."

Response

Joaquin Flores, representing TG Engineers, said the investors have responded to concerns raised by the community regarding the proposal. TG Engineers was retained by KEPCO-LG to secure the conditional-use permit.

Flores said KEPCO-LG has coordinated with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to discuss, at length, the biological surveys that would be conducted at the project site.

"We did discover a host plant for the butterfly species, the Mariana eight-spot," Flores said. "However, our chief biologists have reported they haven't seen that butterfly for the last 38 years."

According to Flores, they did not pursue biological surveys outside the perimeter of the proposed site.

In response to concerns over a temperature change, Flores said that heat disperses quickly in a very large solar field, back to ambient temperature.

Flores said they did not find snails within the 250-acre site. Surveyors also did not find any endangered species, he said, with the exception of the fadang.

He said that they have committed to work with the Department of Agriculture to transplant the fadang.

KEPCO-LG expects to start construction in March, depending on the building-permit review process, with a completion goal of December 2019 to early 2020, according to Flores.

AG to defer to Legislature in contract case

By **John O'Connor**
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The Office of the Attorney General will defer to the Legislature over matters involving a \$150,000 contract between the Guam Army National Guard and an environmental consulting company owned by Sen. Fernando Esteves.

According to spokeswoman Carlina Charfauros, the matter does not fall under the purview of the attorney general's office.

"If the contract is being investigated or is going to be, it would not be with us," Charfauros said. "If it is an ethics issue, then the Legislature would handle it under their ethics committee."

Legislative ethics standards state that lawmakers are prohibited from engaging in private business activity that could in any way be seen as conflicting with their role as senator. The rules also warn against senators

who "engage in business with the government, which could reasonably be seen as influential on their duties."

Guam law also bars business transactions by elected officials that may become a conflict of interest.

Esteves shares oversight of the Guam Guard through his role as a member of the legislative committee on military affairs.

He has stated that he had no involvement in the company contracted with the Guam Army Guard - Eco-Friendly Resources LLC - and that he only has equity ownership of the company.

February 2017 resignation letter

Esteves has provided The Guam Daily Post with a resignation letter dated Feb. 7, 2017, in which he steps down as president of Eco-Friendly Resources, but remains the company's sole owner.

However, the Post did find a July 11, 2017, record on the U.S. General Services Administration's System for Award Management website, in which Esteves is still listed as the company president. That information is provided by the company.

The Post requested clarification from the senator, but no response was received as of press time.

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GUAM BOARD OF ALLIED HEALTH EXAMINERS

Regular Session Meeting, Friday, February 2, 2018 at 12:00 PM at Terlaje Professional Building, 194 Herman Cortez Avenue, 2nd Floor, Suite 209 Health Professional Licensing Office Board Conference Room, Hagatna, Guam.

For more information please contact the Board office at 735-7405 thru 12. Persons with disabilities needing special accommodations may call Jimmy Sian at 735-7172 or the telecommunication device for the Hearing/Speech Impaired (TDD) at 649-1801. Executive meeting may be called if necessary.

