New Molasses Leak Stops Maui Harbor Shipments

KAHULUI, Hawaii (AP) — A shipping company is temporarily halting all shipments of molasses to the mainland after a minor leak into a Maui harbor. Two gallons of molasses leaked into Kahului Harbor Sunday, as Alexander & Baldwin workers were loading a shipment into a barge, *Hawaii News Now* reported. The leak comes after shipping giant Matson Inc. was responsible for more than 200,000 gallons of molasses leaking into Honolulu Harbor in early September. The leak killed more than 26,000 fish and other marine life and Matson has been subpoenaed by a federal grand jury for documents relating to the spill.

Alexander & Baldwin President Chris Benjamin said the shipping company is investigating the leak, which appears to be a break in the pipeline. "While the leak into the harbor was very small and quickly dissipated, we take all of these incidents seriously and will not resume our loading until the pipeline has been repaired," he said. The section where the leak occurred was not underwater and was encased in cement, the company said, adding that it was discovered by its 24-hour monitoring team.

Matson stopped shipping molasses for A&B after the September spill. A&B was stockpiling the substance on Maui and last week was re-starting shipments. In 2003, a leaking pipeline dumped a reported 50,000 gallons of molasses in the harbor. The company owns Hawaiian Commercial and Sugar Company, the state's last sugar plantation, which produces about 50,000 tons of molasses a year as a byproduct of the sugar it makes. The molasses is exported to the mainland, to be used as cattle feed.

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