



DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
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News Release 2023-42

**ATTORNEY GENERAL LOPEZ SELECTS UL'S FIRE SAFETY RESEARCH
INSTITUTE TO CONDUCT THOROUGH INVESTIGATION INTO MAUI FIRES**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 31, 2023

HONOLULU – Hawai'i Attorney General Anne E. Lopez announced today that she has selected UL's Fire Safety Research Institute (FSRI), a nonprofit research organization to assess the policies and performance of state and county agencies in preparing for and responding to the Maui wildfires that resulted in significant loss of life and caused about \$5.5 billion in damage. FSRI is a research institute dedicated to addressing the world's unresolved fire safety risks and emerging dangers.

"I am committed to an independent, unbiased, and transparent investigation into government actions during the fires," said Attorney General Lopez. "I hear the frustration and understand that many have had their belief in government shaken by this unprecedented tragedy. It is crucial to preserve faith in government action by using science and sound investigative techniques to determine the facts."

Attorney General Lopez further emphasized, "We can improve our responsiveness and resilience. Once the FSRI investigation is completed, our next step is to take decisive action to rectify any issues and develop new policies, procedures, and necessary actions to save lives in the future."

Attorney General Lopez said FSRI will complete a thorough investigation of government agency actions up to and during the first 24 to 72 hours of the fire and its aftermath. According to Attorney General Lopez, the investigation findings will be addressed in three phases, with the final report anticipated in approximately 12 months—in late 2024. Attorney General Lopez will share information with the community and people of Hawai'i at the end of each phase and at the completion of the investigation. She also will share the recommendations directed to state and county agencies to prevent and better prepare communities for future disasters.

“The FSRI team grieves with Maui residents in their suffering caused by the recent devastating wildfires,” said Dr. Steve Kerber, FSRI vice president and executive director. “We have been requested by the Attorney General to conduct an independent, broad-based analysis of the incident and will share our evidence-based learnings with the goal of answering stakeholder questions and preventing this type of tragedy from happening in the future. This will be accomplished by working closely with the Lāhainā community, local emergency services, and federal, state, and local organizations.”

FSRI will conduct the investigation in three phases and each phase’s timing will be shared with the public. Any additional time required will be announced, with the intent of ensuring a thorough investigation.

- **Phase 1: Fact-finding about how the fire incident unfolded.**
This phase will take approximately three months and include data gathering on important aspects of the incident. This phase will yield a comprehensive timeline to be the foundation of the analysis.
- **Phase 2: Analysis of the data, determining how various fire protection systems functioned in this fire incident.**
This phase should be completed in approximately six months and will yield an Incident Analysis Report that includes review of policies and actions of state and county agencies in preparing for and responding to the incident.
- **Phase 3: Best practices that incorporate additional data and recommendations for Hawai‘i to take action toward prevention.**
This phase will yield a Forward-Looking Report to answer the question, “how do we prevent this from happening again?” It will include recommendations, strategies and tactical considerations from subject matter experts. Once this phase is completed, approximately 12 months after the start of the investigation, a report of the findings and recommendations will be shared with the people of Hawai‘i.

“The FSRI investigation and what we learn from science and sound investigative practices will result in a set of concrete policy recommendations that will help ensure a safer, more prepared Hawai‘i,” said Attorney General Lopez.

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About the Office of the Attorney General

The Attorney General is the chief legal officer and chief law enforcement officer of the State of Hawai‘i. The Attorney General is appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. The Attorney General is by statute authorized to independently proceed with investigations and works to deliver on its mission of providing excellent legal and public services in a timely manner.

About Fire Safety Research Institute

UL's Fire Safety Research Institute (FSRI) strives to advance fire safety knowledge and strategies to create safer environments. Using advanced fire science, rigorous research, extensive outreach and education in collaboration with an international network of partners, the organization imparts stakeholders with the knowledge, tools, and resources that enable them to make better, more fire safe decisions that ultimately save lives and property. To learn more, visit fsri.org.

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