

# Honolulu High-Rise Recovers from Fire

A major fire swept through a 20-story office condominium in downtown Honolulu, Hawaii. It was one of the most extreme fires in the city's history. Fire forces from across the entire island came to the site to battle the eight-hour blaze, and numerous firefighters were injured in the process.



## DESCRIPTION

Floor after floor of the office complex were gutted by fire and inundated with water. There was extensive damage and the growing threat of mold contamination. Early efforts to dry out the building used “labor from the streets,” setting up an “expert dilemma” for the course of the case.

## ISSUES

Adjusters International observed the early stages of mold growth — a common problem in tropical zones — stemming from the huge quantities of water used to extinguish the fire.

The insurance carrier wanted to replace wallboard with quarter-inch sheets of drywall over existing wallboard, a measure that would save the insurance company millions of dollars.

The insurance carrier hired a consultant from New York to assess and estimate the damage, and refused to consider the cost of local labor.

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### SOLUTIONS APPLIED

Adjusters International hired an industrial hygienist to test for mold, determine a protocol to control the growth, and then estimate the repair. The two-part project required emergency stabilization of the mold growth using a thorough drying process, and then the estimation of damage and repairs.

Adjusters International coordinated a “demo” repair using quarter-inch drywall to illustrate the architectural disadvantage of this kind of repair. Ultimately, Adjusters International was able to prove that a full repair was the only practical measure.

Adjusters International prepared a per-diem analysis to demonstrate just how inefficient a plan it was to hire labor from the mainland.

### OUTCOME

Adjusters International worked tirelessly to demonstrate the scope of damage, determine the best route for the repair, which included control of the mold, and ensure quality repair work throughout the building.

***“ Handling a claim without Adjusters International in your corner is like going to court without a lawyer. You just don’t do it! ...***

***Anyone who tries to handle a major claim themselves should speak to me. I’ll convince them otherwise.”***

Calvin S. Oki  
Building Manager  
Interstate Building

