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Kalihi housing under curfew after feud leads to shooting

Feud escalates to shooting as gang friction heats up between housing projects

By **Dan Nakaso**
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Curfews and other new restrictions go into effect tonight for Kūhiō Park Terrace and Kalihi Valley Homes after an escalating feud between residents from both public housing projects ended in a shooting yesterday and threats of further retaliation.

"We need to put a tight net around both properties," said Denise Wise, executive director of the Hawai'i Public Housing Authority. "I know some tenants will be inconvenienced, but frankly I'd rather have that than a fatality."

Increased patrols of both Honolulu police and housing authority security guards will enforce a new 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. curfew that goes into effect tonight and will last indefinitely, Wise said.

Residents who work at night and need to get into their homes after each night's curfew must register with security guards to be allowed on the grounds. And only immediate family members who register in advance will be allowed to stay overnight, Wise said.

The increased measures were put in place yesterday after authorities heard increasing threats of retaliation following yesterday's shooting, she said.

They'll remain, Wise said, "until we have a pretty good control on the situation and we have good assurance that the violence has de-escalated."

Yesterday's shooting at Kalihi Valley Homes followed two beatings and a stabbing there this month.

The 19-year-old victim in yesterday's shooting was taken to The Queen's Medical Center in serious condition while a 21-year-old man declined treatment at the scene, police said.

Two male suspects were being sought. One was described as a juvenile and the other was described as 18 to 20 years old.

Police Maj. William Chur, who has headed the police district that includes the Kalihi area for most of the past year, said problems within the Kalihi Valley Homes project "had diminished big time — up until last week."

A Kūhiō Park Terrace man in his late teens or early 20s went to Kalihi Valley Homes on Kamehameha IV Road "a week or two ago," where he got into a fight with one of the Kalihi Valley Homes residents, Chur said.

"Apparently, the KPT boy got 'dirty licking' and was taken to the hospital where he didn't wake

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up for a couple of days," Chur said.

Then on March 18, a 20-year-old man who lives at Kalihi Valley Homes reported being beaten and stabbed by two men when he went to move his car about 9:30 p.m. after hearing that a group of young men from Kūhiō Park Terrace had damaged several cars near his home.

The man said two young men that he did not know approached and began assaulting him for no apparent reason. The victim told police the two assailants jumped in a white pickup truck that sped away.

An 18-year-old man from Kūhiō Park Terrace was arrested Wednesday in connection with the case, while a 16-year-old boy, also from Kūhiō Park Terrace, turned himself into police on Sunday.

Yesterday's shooting occurred in front of the Kalihi Valley Homes apartment of the man who came out on top in one of the fistfights earlier this month.

The people injured in the shooting were part of a larger group of teens and young men who were playing cards on the lānai in front of the apartment, Chur said.

A handgun and a shotgun were used in the shooting, Chur said.

Police did not know if either of the boys who were shot yesterday were involved in the earlier fistfight.

"We're not prepared to say definitively that (the shooting) was in retaliation for the earlier incident, but it certainly could be, and that causes us a great deal of concern," Chur said. "The community can assume we are trying to do everything we can to ease the situation."

Tuuese Taliloa, site supervisor for Millenium Security, which provides private security services

at Kalihi Valley Homes, said the shooting is an outgrowth of gang friction between residents of Kūhiō Park Terrace and Kalihi Valley Homes that has simmered for decades.

Taliloa, who lives at Kūhiō Park Terrace and who has worked at Kalihi Valley Homes for the past 13 years, said gang affiliation is not based on ethnicity or where members go to school.

"Basically, you just hang with the guys where you live," Taliloa said. "The shooting was just the KPT boys versus the KVH boys."

Members of the Kalihi Valley Homes community patrol were meeting with Maj. Chur at the project about a week ago when a group of young men from Kūhiō Park Terrace showed up and a confrontation began.

"They was calling us out right in front of the major," Taliloa said.

Kalihi Valley Homes security guards are trained to call police for help, Taliloa said, and the Kalihi police substation is just down the road.

Four private security officers used to patrol the sprawling public housing complex each shift. But because of budget cuts, the number of officers

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has been trimmed to two — plus a guard at the security office at the lone drive-through entrance, Taliloa said.

But the people involved in yesterday's shooting apparently entered the housing project through one or more of six different pedestrian gates, Taliloa said.

"Afterwards, they just ran out to the street where a car or truck was waiting for them," he said. "Nobody managed to get a license plate number. It all happened so fast."

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