

Hula Dancing the NJDPES Way

Who was that man in the grass skirt?

That's what inquiring DEPE employees were asking after Dennis Hart, administrator of Wastewater Facilities Regulation, was spotted hula dancing in the courtyard of the 401 East State Street headquarters building in 90-plus degree heat recently.

It seems Dennis made a bet with his staff a year ago that if they could double the 200 NJ Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NJDPES) permits issued in fiscal 1991, he would celebrate by doing the hula in public. So when the 401st permit of FY92 squeaked through the approval process before the July 1 deadline, it was time for Dennis to make good on his promise.

"I challenged them to double their output and they did it," said Dennis, a 33-year-old East Brunswick resident. "I had to keep my end of the bargain."

Donning a grass skirt and sporting a lei over his yellow and blue tie, he hopped up on the brick ledge in the courtyard and swayed back and forth to the Hawaiian music blaring from a nearby cassette player. More than 200 DEPE employees stood outside in the blistering heat jostling for the best view of his performance. Afterward, reviews were mixed.

"I think he'd better not quit his day job," said one critic whose identity is being withheld for his own good by *In the DEPE*.



Others were more charitable.

"Overall, I'd give him an 8," said another reviewer who watched Dennis' debut from the air-conditioned comfort of the cafeteria. "His technique needs a little work, but anyone who goes out in public wearing a grass skirt deserves extra points for courage."

Inquiring DEPEOPLE can only speculate about what Dennis plans for an encore next year, but his boss already has a few ideas of his own.

"If Dennis' staff eliminates the NJPDES backlog completely by July 1, 1993, Dennis is going to eat a state car," said John Weingart, assistant commissioner for Environmental Regulation.