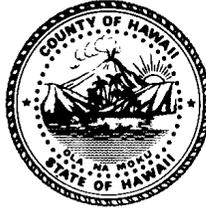


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MEDIA RELEASE

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CHANGES IN PROCEDURES FOR COUNTY GREEN WASTE RECYCLING

The County of Hawai'i Department of Environmental Management will begin charging a new tipping fee on March 1, 2015 to businesses that deposit green waste at recycling facilities in Pu'uana'hulu and Hilo. Revenue from the new fee will help to finance an expansion of green waste recycling services across the island.

The new fee will not affect individual residents or homeowners who will continue to be allowed to drop off residential green waste free of charge at seven locations around the island.

The county currently pays more than \$1.6 million a year to recycle green waste into mulch that is distributed free to the community and consumers across the island are asking for more recycling opportunities closer to home.

The new tipping fee is expected to raise more than \$500,000 a year to help finance an expansion of organics recycling services island-wide, including establishing new green waste recycling locations at additional transfer stations. The first of these new green waste recycling facilities will be established on May 1, 2015 at the Waimea transfer station, said Bobby Jean Leithead Todd, director of the Department of Environmental Management.

“Adding new green waste drop-off and recycling locations at additional transfer stations will help us to divert more organics from our waste stream, and will extend the life of our landfills,” said Leithead Todd. “Our residents have been asking for more recycling opportunities and we feel the timing is right to launch this initiative.”

The new fee on commercial operators will be \$21.25 per ton which is 25 percent of the normal solid waste tipping fee of \$85 per ton. The green waste tipping fee was established by the Hawai'i County Council in 2005 but the county administration delayed imposing the fee during the Great Recession.

Starting March 1, 2015, commercial operators will be required to deposit green waste at either the Pu'uana'hulu or Hilo organics recycling facilities. Residential users will be able to continue to deposit green waste at Hilo, Pu'uana'hulu, Kealakehe, Ke'ei, Puakō, Pāhoa and Kea'au.

Mechanical loading of mulch at Kealakehe transfer station has already been expanded from two days per week to seven days per week to encourage more residents to use recycled green waste for farming and landscaping.

Beginning March 1, 2015, the county will also waive loading fees for small loads of mulch (less than 3.5 cubic yards) that are picked up by residential customers at the Kealakehe transfer station.

For more information about greenwaste recycling and free mulch, please visit www.HawaiiZeroWaste.org.