



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

News Release

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GOVERNOR

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**PUBLIC HEARINGS FOR BEVERAGE CONTAINER DEPOSIT PROGRAM
ADMINISTRATIVE RULES**

HONOLULU – The Hawaii State Department of Health (DOH) will hold a series of public hearings throughout the state from April 13th -21st, on the administrative rules for the Beverage Container Deposit law, also known as the “bottle bill”. The law, which the Legislature passed in 2002 and amended last year, currently contains rules that are scheduled to expire on March 31, 2005.

These public hearings are to solicit comments and suggestions **only** for improving the administrative rules used to manage the program. Many specifications of the existing program are mandated by statute and can only be amended by the Legislature.

“We know many consumers have experienced frustration with the current beverage container program,” said Chiyome Fukino, M.D., Director, Hawaii State Health Department. “The Administration is working to improve these rules to make the program more efficient and manageable.”

The proposed rules make it simpler for companies and others to become certified redemption centers and will guide the State in contracting with the counties or private recyclers to set up centers in remote locations.

“We are trying to make things better, but the law limits how far we can go. Some of the public’s major complaints cannot be fixed by rule and must be fixed in the law by the Legislature,” said Laurence Lau, Deputy Director for Environmental Health.

(more)

The Department of Health is acting to improve operations including ensuring people are paid their full deposit value on recycled containers. DOH is conducting extensive testing of the segregated rate formulas used to compute the number of containers per pound when items are weighed.

Some examples of issues that cannot be addressed by administrative rules are public concerns that stores do not have to take back the containers they sell; this is written into the law. In addition, the law must also be changed before redemptions centers can accept crushed cans or crushed plastic containers. Changes to the law can only be made through legislation.

The Lingle-Aiona Administration believes this law is poorly written and has called for counties to develop comprehensive recycling programs that can recycle all types of solid waste, including paper and yard clippings which make up a significant portion of the trash that goes into landfills. Such comprehensive recycling programs would be specific to each county's infrastructure and existing solid waste management programs.

The State anticipates the new administrative rules will take effect by May 6, 2005. Until the new rules are adopted, the existing operating arrangements will remain in place.

Meetings will be held at the following locations:

Hawaii:

Wednesday, April 13, 2005, at 6:00 p.m.
Aupuni Center, Conference Room
25 Aupuni Street, Hilo, Hawaii

Thursday, April 14, 2005 at 6:00 p.m.
King Kamehameha's Kona Beach Hotel,
Islander Room
75-5660 Palani Road, Kailua-Kona, Hawaii

Oahu:

Tuesday, April 19, 2005 at 6:00 p.m.
Washington Intermediate School Cafeteria
1633 South King Street, Honolulu, Hawaii

Kauai:

Wednesday, April 20, 2005 at 6:00 p.m.
Kauai War Memorial Convention Hall,
Kauai Board Room
4191 Hardy Street, Lihue, Kauai

Maui:

Thursday, April 21, 2005 at 6:00 p.m.
Lihikai Elementary School Cafeteria
335 South Papa Avenue, Kahului, Maui

The proposed rules can be viewed at the Department of Health's Web site at www.hawaii.gov/health .

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