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NEWS RELEASE

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Fact Sheet about Mulch Procedures and Availability at County Facilities

In order to minimize the spread of invasive species such as insects, weeds and diseases, the mulch at the East Hawai'i Organics Facility in Hilo undergoes an enhancement process.

During the enhancement process, the mulch is spread into windrows for a minimum of 15 days, and reaches the temperature of 130°F, which is high enough to destroy harmful bacteria, weed seeds and invasive species such as Little Fire Ants, coqui frogs, 'Ōhi'a Wilt Fungus (also known as Rapid 'Ōhi'a Death), etc. Mulch is not released to the public without undergoing the enhancement process at the EHOFF.

Mulch at the West Hawai'i Organics Facility does not undergo the same enhancement process as the mulch at the East Hawai'i facility; the temperature and dry conditions in West Hawai'i allow the mulch to remain pest-free. Monthly testing of the mulch at the West Hawai'i Organics Facility has shown no fire ants.

The County's contractor, Hawaiian Earth Recycling, is responsible for the distribution and loading of the mulch at both the East and West Hawai'i Organics Facilities. There is currently no cost for the limited supply of enhanced mulch and no loading fees.

Residential self-load customers are allowed to load an unrestricted amount of mulch at the self-load pile, as long as supplies last. Commercial customers are not allowed to self-load mulch.

The supply of mulch is limited at the East Hawai'i facility, and depends on a number of factors such as the amount of greenwaste dropped off at the County facilities. There is regularly an abundant supply of mulch available to the public at the West Hawai'i facility.

The public is also encouraged to visit the Kealakehe Mulch Pick-Up Area. There is currently no cost for the mulch or loading fees. The mulch is available on a first-come-first-served basis, while supplies last.

Visit www.hawaiiizerowaste.org for more information.