



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

News Release

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**HI-5 Recycling Program Redemption Rate Remains High at 72%
Container Fee Won't Increase**

HONOLULU – The Hawai'i State Department of Health (DOH) announced today that the annual redemption rate for the state's beverage container recycling was 72 percent in fiscal year 2008 (July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2008). The Deposit Beverage Container (DBC) program's redemption rate is up 4 percent from last fiscal year's rate of 68 percent. The current rate represents more than 680 million containers recycled during fiscal year 2008.

After reviewing the rate and the DBC fund, the director of health in consultation with the state auditor has determined the DBC container fee will remain at one cent for each container sold in Hawai'i. This means that the deposit plus container fee will continue at six-cents — a five-cent deposit to be returned to the consumer when the container is recycled and a non-refundable one-cent container fee for administrative costs.

The redemption rate is a measure of participation in the recycling program and is used to determine the container fee amount paid by distributors and consumers. If the redemption rate exceeds 70 percent, state law requires the container fee to increase from one cent to 1.5 cents per container, unless the director of health, in consultation with the state auditor, determines that a fee increase is not needed.

In determining the need for a fee increase, the DOH and auditor must decide whether program expenditures will be greater than revenues and whether the redemption rate will deplete the special fund balance to the extent that a fee increase is needed to cover additional program costs.

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A recent statewide survey by the DOH also found that the number of overall people recycling is up from 2006 to 2008.

While the program is viewed more positively than it was two years ago, the survey showed mixed results regarding satisfaction. The greatest improvement cited by respondents is having “more choices”—in number of centers, hours of operation, and shorter wait times—but satisfaction was down when it came to the accuracy of redemptions when containers were weighed.

“We are encouraged by the growing number of residents who are recycling, but there is still room to improve the recycling experience,” said Karl Motoyama, of the DOH Office of Solid Waste Management. “DOH continues to encourage recycling companies to train their employees on customer service relations, and to provide customers with options when calculating refund amounts. While some consumers prefer to have their containers counted to get back an exact refund, others prefer to have their loads weighed because it is quicker.”

The survey, conducted in April 2008, covered 701 residents, 400 on O‘ahu and about 100 each on Maui, the Big Island and Kaua‘i, with a 95 percent confidence level. Local market research firm Ward Research conducted the survey.

The HI-5 program continues to be a strong part of state and county comprehensive recycling efforts, including Honolulu City & County’s expanding curbside recycling program.

For more information on the State’s Deposit Beverage Container Program visit www.hi5deposit.com.

Results comparing the 2006 survey to 2008 survey findings:

- Recycling activity: up 13 percent to 72 percent.
- Number of overall recyclers: up 12 percent to 82 percent.
- Number of people who visit redemption centers: up 10 percent to 60 percent —greater than either city recycle bins or nonprofit contributions.
- Overall awareness of HI-5: up one percent (91 to 92 percent).
- Redemption center satisfaction levels up specifically in number of centers, hours of operation, and shorter wait times, but down in accuracy of redemptions when weighed; 66 percent said their particular redemption center had worsened.

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