



PRESS RELEASE
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CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Monday, February 27, 2020
Press Office: 768-5768

O‘ahu storm water utility study begins

HONOLULU — The City and County of Honolulu (City) is studying the formation of a storm water utility for O‘ahu. The storm water utility will create a dedicated fee for cleaner water and a healthier ocean environment, based on an equitable fee structure.

The City is soliciting input on the fee structure, credits, and program priorities for a storm water utility. As part of a robust public involvement program, the first round of community meetings begins on February 3rd. Go to www.StormWaterUtilityOahu.org for the schedule. A Stakeholder Advisory Group has also been convened.

Rain — millions of gallons — flushes down rooftops, streets and other hard surfaces collecting dirt, debris, trash, and more pollutants along the way. Then, as storm water, it makes its way into ditches, drains, and canals that flow into streams and the ocean. Our island and ocean environments are degraded by the pollutants in the storm water.

Additionally, urbanization and an increase of hard surfaces that don’t absorb water means much of this water runs off the mountains and land, rather than percolating back into the soil, robbing our island’s groundwater supply of replenishment. This excess runoff can create localized drainage flooding issues.

In 2015, recognizing that *“If Hawaii does not begin planning ahead, ensuring the islands’ supply of fresh water in the future may cost the public a great deal...”* Hawaii’s State Legislature adopted a bill that allows counties to set up storm water utilities.

Storm water utilities provide municipalities with dedicated, fee-based funding available exclusively for storm water management purposes. Already in the United States, there are more than 2,000 storm water utilities across 39 states. The City Department of Facility Maintenance is overseeing this process.

To get updates, community members can provide their contact information at www.StormWaterUtilityOahu.org. This website will be updated regularly with news about the study and upcoming opportunities to participate.

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