

Waimanalo Gulch Landfill Expansion  
Community Meetings  
Responses to Questions and Comments

The following questions / comments were raised by community members at the **July 10<sup>th</sup> meeting at Nanakuli High and Intermediate School**. Responses were provided by the Department of Environmental Services except where noted.

- Q:** What is going into the private landfills (PVT, etc.) and who regulates the safety of the materials disposed of in these sites – cars and other contaminants?
- A:** Contact State of Hawaii, Department of Health, Environmental Management Division, Solid and Hazardous Waste Branch – Steven Chang, Chief (586-4226).  
The State issues operating permits for all landfills. Landfill permits are available for review at the State Department of Health.
- C:** Land Use Commission and City Planning Commission said to close Waimanalo Gulch. In light of this, how are you proposing to expand it and keep it open?
- A:** The City will seek an amendment to the State Special Use Permit to allow an expansion at Waimanalo Gulch Sanitary Landfill. The amendment will be submitted to the City Planning Commission for approval and forwarding to the State Land Use Commission.
- Q:** What is the status of DOH violations?
- Response provided by Waste Management of Hawaii.
- A:** Waste Management of Hawaii has been working closely with the City and County of Honolulu and Hawaii, and the State Department of Health (DOH) to correct past issues at the landfill. Waste Management has cooperated with DOH throughout the investigation of this matter. Waste Management has undertaken significant efforts in recent months to correct all of the issues that occurred in the past. Two items still in process with DOH are the ash monofill grades and a replacement leachate riser.
- C:** The data that is available regarding tonnage and composition is different from year to year. This lack of consistency creates a moving target that is hard to work with. Why is this?
- A:** The City has tonnage data from computer/scale records for each year of landfill operation. The refuse tonnage and composition is not consistent from year to year and depends on population, economy, and other factors.
- C:** Why is Mayor Hannemann not honoring his campaign promise to have government keep the promises it makes to the people? The promise made by the previous administration to close the landfill, he is not keeping.
- A:** Mayor Hannemann made every attempt to fulfill the previous administration's commitment to close the landfill by 2008. A number of citizens deliberated on this issue, including the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Landfill Site Selection and the Honolulu City Council. The City Council selected Waimanalo Gulch as the next landfill site by

Resolution 04-348, CD1, FD1 on December 1, 2004. After taking office and doing much research regarding refuse, it became evident to Mayor Hannemann that the previous commitment could not be met. The Mayor now recognizes that Oahu must have landfill capacity to provide for future needs.

**C:** The City is waiving planning and permits without community input. All promises have been broken. Why is this?

**A:** The proposed expansion of WG is being brought before the community for review and comment. It is not our intent to request any waivers from the planning and permitting processes. Planning and permitting processes for other developments are controlled by the Department of Planning and Permitting. Questions regarding other developments may be directed to the Department of Planning and Permitting, 523-4432.

**C:** What happened to the Blue Ribbon Committee results?

**A:** The final report was submitted to the Honolulu City Council in December 2003. The report can be accessed on [www.opala.org](http://www.opala.org), Resource Library, Landfill Studies/Reports. Copies of this report are also available at State of Hawaii Libraries and at the City Municipal Library. It was noted in the report that "Waimanalo Gulch got the highest score in the committee's double blind process" during which neither the committee members nor the consultant knew the identity of the proposed sites as they were being ranked. Waimanalo Gulch was removed from the committee's final recommendations due to a motion by a committee member for its removal because of the prior administration's commitment to close the site making it a non-viable site. Four committee members resigned from the committee at this point because the study showed that Waimanalo Gulch was the best site and it was not being recommended to City Council.

**Q:** Where is the protection for us?

**A:** The protection of public health and safety is provided by regulatory and operational controls at the site. This includes oversight by the EPA and the State Dept of Health. The landfill operator also self-reports findings of its monitoring program as a standard practice to advise the community of its efforts 'in good faith.'

**Q:** Is the ash permit separate from the landfill permit?

**A:** No. There is one operating permit for Waimanalo Gulch Sanitary Landfill.

**Q:** Is the EIS expansion for ash and municipal solid waste (MSW)?

**A:** Yes. Both are required for this project.

- Q:** What is the status of the ideas presented to Mayor Harris regarding alternatives (i.e., plasma arc technology, gasification)
- A:** The City issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Financing, Design, Construction and Twenty Year Operation of a Municipal Solid Waste Plasma Arc/Torch and/or Gasification Facility in January 2003. Submittals were received and reviewed; however, proposals were rejected based on operating costs, inability to divert certain materials from landfill, and need for landfill capacity for ash/residue.
- The City is preparing to issue another RFP for Plasma Arc or Gasification Processes in late 2006 or early 2007.