

# Christmas tree recycling program is mulch work

Volunteers will staff 12 recycling sites to turn the trees into mulch for parks and gardens

BY PAT OMANDAM  
Star-Bulletin

**I**t's time again to recycle those unflocked Christmas trees.

For the seventh year in a row, members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints will provide volunteers for the first weekend of the Tree-Cycling project, mustering some 700 people to work at 12 recycling sites, said church coordinator Amanda Dupont.

Dupont said the effort is the biggest annual service project for the 50,000 Hawaii members and is a great way to kick off the new year.

"We believe in doing community service, and being a positive influence in the community," she said.

"It's one that members really enjoy," Dupont said.

Recycling will be held between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. Saturday and Jan. 10 at various sites island-wide.

State Recycling Coordinator Carrie McCabe said the church's volunteers have become a cornerstone for the project.

The recycling effort began when an employee at the state Department of Health thought people should recycle trees, especially after so much media attention is focused on their arrival via container ship to Hawaii, she said. More than 115,000 trees were shipped to Hawaii this year.

McCabe said this year is special because the state, city and private businesses have offered mulchers for the project. Hawaiian Electric Co. was the project's main sponsor, providing \$7,500 for gas to operate the equipment.

Many Christmas traditions, such as greeting cards, wrapping paper and trees end up in the garbage once the holidays have passed, and McCabe wants resi-



BY GEORGE F. LEE, Star-Bulletin

Keone Kino, left, and Laurence Iohopa unload a Christmas tree from Kino's truck yesterday afternoon. While city refuse sites are taking in old trees now, mulching sites will open on Saturday.

dents to celebrate the season without creating unnecessary waste. The goal this year is to recycle about half the trees brought here.

"If one out of every two people recycle their trees instead of throwing it away, that's pretty neat," McCabe said.

The project turns trees into mulch, which is used throughout the islands in parks and community gardens. People interested in recycling need to remember that trees with tinsel or those

which are flocked will not be accepted.

McCabe said the flocking usually has chemicals that should not be introduced into the soil. Also, volunteers will only accept trees between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m.

Residents can also recycle trees through monthly green waste pickup, if available in their neighborhoods, or by bringing trees to any of the several city Refuse Convenience Centers located on the island. The centers are open from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily.

## Where the trees go

Here are the project's recycling sites for the next two Saturdays:

- **Honolulu:** Kapiolani Community College, Lincoln Elementary School, University of Hawaii law school and Kaiser High School
- **Windward:** Kailua Intermediate and Kaneohe

- District Park
- **North Shore:** Brigham Young University Hawaii and Waimea Falls Park
- **Central Oahu:** 16 Acres Park in Milliani and Waiau District Park
- **Leeward Oahu:** Kapolei Elementary School and Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center