

Special Meeting hosted by Rep. Darius Kila – September 12, 2023

Q: Are golf courses/country clubs considered agricultural, and if not, what are they classified as?

- Golf courses are considered nonresidential, not agriculture.
- Agriculture is for food-producing farmers.
- They don't get the same break that agricultural operators get.

Q: I live in a townhouse – how is that calculated when it comes to billing?

- Townhouses are charged a multiunit rate.
- They usually have one master meter that serves the entire property.
- The BWS takes the total usage in that one meter, divides it by the number of dwelling units in the property, and then applies the tiered structure to calculate the bill.

Q: You shared that agriculture customers get a slightly different rate. This goes for those growing flowers, food, and trees, correct?

- Yes
- The agricultural water rate, which is the discounted water rate per 1000 gallons, is about 40% lower than what it would typically cost to serve agricultural customers.

Comment: The Waimanalo community is diverse in agriculture. Many in the community think it's unfair that someone growing flowers gets the same rate as someone growing food. The BWS needs to prioritize food sustainability over ornamentals.

- BWS is proposing a new program for new farmers to help support food sustainability. This would waive:
 - The installation fee and Water System Facilities Charge for new $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch and 1-inch meters connecting to the BWS system for the first time.

Q: Is there any concern for the vegetative aspect of the upland water capture (it's all orographic condensation) as we have invasive species like hale koa and albizia coming in?

- Yes, there's a concern. The orographic rainfall patterns are adjusting with climate change. When the temperature increases, rainfall decreases. This has been a consistent pattern over the past ten years.
- In terms of forest health, it's absolutely essential. We have created partnerships (see the list below) where we provide the funds for them to conduct on-the-ground improvements, invasive species control, replanting vegetative firebreaks for wildland fire protection, and others. The partnerships include:
 - the Ko'olau Mountain Watershed Partnership
 - Invasive Species Committee deal in our Division of Forestry and Wildlife.
 - We have a partnership in Waianae as well, Iron Mountain.

- Albizia removal, certainly miconia, has overtaken the forest. We are doing what we can.