

# WATER MATTERS

Safe, dependable, and affordable water now and into the future



Board of Water Supply  
City and County of Honolulu

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## New Heritage Garden at Halawa Xeriscape Garden

There is a new, green and unthirsty addition now growing at the Board of Water Supply's (BWS) Halawa Xeriscape Garden (HXG). The Heritage Garden was unveiled at the annual HXG Open House and Unthirsty Plant Sale in August, commemorating the 25th anniversary of the creation.

Located across the roadway from the HXG Information Office, the Heritage Garden includes native plants and displays hypertufa stepping stones bearing the handprints and names of the founders, as well as long-time supporters and volunteers who have lent a "helping hand" to continue the garden's mission of encouraging water conservation for the past 25 years.

"Thank you to our volunteers for perpetuating the idea of

using unthirsty plants to help conserve water. As we look at the garden today; it's a tribute to them," said former BWS Manager and Chief Engineer [Kazu Hayashida](#), who had a key role in creating the garden. His handprints were made during a special recognition program held at this year's plant sale, which was attended by about 2,000 people.



*The newly installed Heritage Garden marks Halawa Xeriscape Garden's 25th Anniversary*

The Heritage Garden was designed by BWS Landscape Architect [Glen Fujiwara](#) and was installed in June at minimal cost, thanks to a week-long service project by Boy Scout Troop 147, led by Eagle Scout Ben Sakai.

The Halawa Xeriscape Garden is open to the public on Wednesdays and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., except for holidays.

## We're Working For You

The findings of the City audit on the Board of Water Supply (BWS) released in September affirm that BWS is complying with city charter and city ordinance requirements and our operations comply with federal, state and local mandates.

Many of the Auditor's recommendations in regards to improving operations and customer service have already been implemented and the results show:

- Changes made to the meter reading process now allows the successful capture of 98% or more of our meter readings.
- The BWS has hired additional meter readers and billing staff to meet increased workloads resulting from the move from bi-monthly to monthly billing.
- The billing system has been reconfigured to identify any customer who has received an estimated bill for two consecutive months. These bills must be reviewed and manually approved before they are sent out.

- Call wait times have decreased to an average of 2-5 minutes or less.

For 85 years, the BWS has been providing safe, dependable and affordable water to Oahu customers. In every facet of our role as stewards of the island's drinking water supply, we continue to do so today. Our rates and billing charges are designed in accordance to national standards. As additional assurance that we are managing our ratepayers' money effectively, the BWS is audited annually by an independent accounting firm. Last year, this independent audit was conducted by Accuity, LLP, which found no significant or material financial deficiencies. That financial audit information is posted on our website [www.boardofwatersupply.com](http://www.boardofwatersupply.com).

The revenue collected through the monthly billing charge and customer water usage rates covers only the cost to provide water service and to maintain and improve the water system. Any financial surplus

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## We're Working For You (continued)

collected is not a profit, but is used towards ensuring we have sufficient debt service coverage, as well as maintaining a 45-day operating reserve in case of a disaster or an emergency.



BWS is funded by water rates and water usage, not taxes. We put your water rates to work to maintain, repair and improve our water system and to deliver on our commitment to quality service. Thanks to our customers, we have managed to do this and keep our monthly billing charges among the lowest in the state and among the bottom half compared to other major cities across the nation.

Cost Comparison for 11,500 Gallons of Water (per month)

San Francisco	\$102.41
Seattle	\$95.37
Kauai County	\$74.33
Los Angeles	\$74.13
San Diego	\$67.93
Hawaii County	\$58.88
San Jose	\$58.54
Houston	\$56.58
Honolulu	\$54.79
Maui County	\$46.75
Las Vegas	\$40.55
Phoenix	\$36.42
San Antonio	\$30.62

The BWS appreciates the feedback from you, our customers, as we continually strive to maintain high quality water and excellent customer service.

If you have questions about BWS operations or billing and rate charges, please visit our website [www.boardofwatersupply.com](http://www.boardofwatersupply.com) or contact the Communications Office at (808) 748-5041.

## Did You Know...?

You can use beer to beat the slug problem in your garden. Put a can with some beer in the ground. Slugs can crawl in, but they can't get out!



More practical, earth-friendly and water-saving gardening tips are available through the educational workshops presented by the Friends of Halawa Xeriscape Garden.

For more information and to register for workshops, visit [www.boardofwatersupply.com](http://www.boardofwatersupply.com) and click on the "Community" tab to find a link to the workshop schedule.



### DIY Cleaning Tip!

**A mixture of equal parts water, white vinegar and rubbing alcohol will remove salt deposits on your clay pots as well as disinfect and clean your gardening tools.**

### BWS-Produced Video Explains Meter Reading



The BWS recently produced a 5-minute video that shows how the BWS collects customer meter readings. The video features both the automated and manual meter-reading processes. It also shows some of the conditions that challenge a meter reader's ability to get an actual read and ends with helpful tips on how the customer can help meter readers obtain meter readings.

For more information on water meters and how the BWS obtains meter readings, plus an "On the Job" video featuring the work of BWS meter readers, visit [www.boardofwatersupply.com](http://www.boardofwatersupply.com).

**TROUBLE CALL ... (808) 748-5000**

Customer Service ... (808) 748-5030

Billing & Payments ... (808) 748-5020



BOARD OF WATER SUPPLY

630 S. Beretania Street · Honolulu, Hawaii 96843

(808) 748-5000

[www.boardofwatersupply.com](http://www.boardofwatersupply.com)