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# KEYS HOUSING

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## Green Living Catches on in Hawai'i

### *Residents Collaborate, and Compete, to Cut Energy Use*

For Christmas last year many EAH Housing residents in Hawai'i received gifts wrapped in cloth. There is no shortage of wrapping paper on the islands; instead the trend was the result of a newfound focus on sustainable living.

Residents in Hawai'i came together for a variety of green events last year including property-wide recycling drives, compact fluorescent light (CFL) bulb handouts, and an energy savings contest.

"We are seeing so many residents take simple steps to go green, and combined it's making a huge impact. Energy use declined consistently at Kukui Tower and other properties throughout the year," said EAH Housing Resource Coordinator Jackie Ma.

The clever cloth-as-wrapping-paper tip was presented at a holiday themed green living event which focused on reducing waste during this hectic time of the year. At the event, residents learned to make arts and crafts out of recycled materials, including turning t-shirts into handbags and making picture frames from scrap cardboard.

Another popular event from last year was the Energy Savings Contest, which drew 259 contestants who competed to reduce their energy use over a four month period. With the grand prize of an iPad-2 at stake, many residents switched the lighting in their

apartments to CFL bulbs, used smart power strips, and took care to 'flip the switch' on lights, computers, and other appliances when not in use.

First place went to Kukui Tower residents the Ma family, who cut their energy bill by 29%. The family, consisting of Zhen

Yao Ma, a construction worker, his wife Wen He Lei, and their children Wen Tao, 4, and Wilfred, 1, said they won the contest by using many simple steps which resulted in significant energy reductions.

"Throughout the year, friends and family members shared their green living tips with each other. Everyone caught on to the idea of investing in their communities to create a sustainable future," said Resource Coordinator Louise Li. "Next year we have a full calendar of green events planned with a few new additions, including an emphasis on eating local and organic foods."



Energy Savings Contest Winners, the Ma family with their new iPad-2

