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Developers to be assessed impact fees for new schools

January 6, 2011 - By ILIMA LOOMIS, Staff Writer

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WAILUKU - Landowners who want to build new housing units in Central, South and West Maui will soon have to pay new "impact fees" for the construction of new school facilities.

The state Department of Education announced Wednesday that it would immediately begin collecting the fees, which range from \$5,373 to \$5,778 per single-family home, and from \$2,055 to \$2,451 for each new multifamily unit.

Previously, developers could be required to pay school impact fees as a condition of county or state land-use approvals. But a 2007 law gave the DOE the power to collect the fees directly in areas that are expected to see a rapid growth in school populations. Maui is the first place in the state to see the new fees implemented, with West Hawaii expected to be the next in line.

"These are all areas where we anticipate the next big wave of residential growth," said Heidi Meeker of the DOE Facilities Development Branch.

On Maui, all properties in the Maui, Baldwin and Lahainaluna high school complexes will be affected.

That means anyone seeking to build in an area served by those schools will be required to pay the fee - including both large developers and individual homeowners, Meeker said.

Major projects would likely trigger the requirement when they start to apply for permits with the county Planning Department, while small landowners would be required to pay when they come in for building permits, she said.

Public hearings on the proposed fees were held in October at Lahainaluna High School and Pomaikai Elementary School.

Meeker said she couldn't estimate the amount of money that would be collected through the program.



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"It's really going to depend on the rate at which things are built," she said.

While the fees would not cover the total cost of building new schools, they would help provide classrooms for a growing population, she said.

"It's just a little bit of assurance that we will have adequate land for new schools, and some amount of construction money," she said.

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