



The Maui News / AMANDA COWAN photo

Construction crews work on the site of a planned Walgreens store in Lahaina last week. The national chain opened its first

Hawaii store on Thursday on Oahu and plans at least four, including the Lahaina store expected to open late in 2008.

# Walgreens coming to Lahaina

Company announces West Maui location; other stores planned

By HARRY EAGAR  
Staff Writer

LAHAINA — Walgreens untied a maile lei on its first Hawaii store on Oahu Thursday and has announced its first Maui location — the mauka side of the intersection of Honoapiilani Highway and Keawe Street.

That store, expected to open late next year, will be the Illinois-based chain's fourth in the islands by then.

Walgreens has an ambitious expansion program into Hawaii, the last state but one — Alaska — where it has not operated.

Each store will require about 40 employees,

Walgreens' spokesman Michael Polzin said the company likes to hire about two-thirds full-time employees at its stores. He said the company recognizes the tight labor market in Hawaii and on the west side of Maui.

"We place emphasis on hiring full time," Polzin said. "We're

*'We're seeing more demand for pharmacy services each year as the population ages and the first baby boomers reach their 60s.'*

— Dana Psomas,  
Walgreens' Hawaii district manager

better off in the long run."

"We're seeing more demand for pharmacy services each year as the population ages and the first baby boomers reach their 60s," said Walgreens' Hawaii district manager, Dana Psomas. "That's happening in Hawaii just as it is on the Mainland, and it's driving the need for more pharmacies."

The company has intentions for more stores on Maui but is not yet ready to announce locations.

"This location presented a great opportunity to serve the Lahaina area," said Psomas. "We're looking for additional sites on Maui and anticipate opening several more stores."

The Lahaina location will be part of a migration of retailing away from downtown. Across the street, Lahaina Cannery Mall has a small expansion in the works, and the first businesses in

Lahaina Gateway, a lifestyle center, will be opening shortly.

Walgreens will construct a 15,000-square-foot building with a drive-through pharmacy window.

"We've learned from our local partners what is important to Hawaii customers, and we'll merchandise the store to the local community," said Psomas.

Walgreens is the nation's biggest pharmacy chain, with nearly 6,000 drug and sundries stores. It promotes its:

- Multi-language prescription labels that allow customers to read their medication directions in any of 14 different languages.

- Electronic connections to all other Walgreens pharmacies across the country. This makes a patient's prescription information available at any Walgreens when a customer is traveling.

- A choice of 11 flavorings

that can be added to liquid medicines that take the "yuck" out of the taste for children.

- A report that lists Medicare Part D plans and manufacturer discount plans for which a pharmacy patient may be eligible. The report can be customized for the medications an individual patient takes to help him or her choose the most cost-effective program.

- Printer cartridge refill service.

- Cafe W, a self-serve beverage fountain and food bar.

- Beauty advisers for cosmetics.

- Prints from digital cameras, either in the store or from home through Walgreens.com. Customers can send photos to any Walgreens store nationwide for pickup by family or friends in an hour.

Walgreens officials said they expect to operate 25 to 30 stores in Hawaii.

Longs Drugs operates 30 stores on Oahu, Maui, Kauai and the Big Island.

■ Harry Eagar can be reached at [heagar@mauinews.com](mailto:heagar@mauinews.com).