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Dec 8, 2008, 12:47pm HST

Walgreens opens Maui pharmacy

Staff *Pacific Business News*

Walgreens (NYSE, Nasdaq: WAG) opened its first Maui store on Monday, in a pharmacy that it recently had acquired in Lahaina.

The pharmacy-only store in the former Lahaina Pharmacy space in a medical office building on Wainee Street was one of four Maui pharmacies the Deerfield, Ill.-based chain acquired.

"We're seeing more demand for pharmacy services each year as the population ages both here in the Islands and on the Mainland," said Hawaii District Manager Dana Psomas. "We're looking forward to meeting this need on Maui."

The former owner of Lahaina Pharmacy, Sheldon Zimmerman, will continue as a part-time pharmacist for Walgreens as part of his retirement transition plan, the company said in a new release. Walgreens also hired Zimmerman's employees to smooth the transition for customers, the company said.

"Working with Walgreens as I step back from the business means my patients will continue to be looked after, and they'll see the same familiar faces behind the counter," said Zimmerman. "I'm thankful to all of my patients for their loyalty over the years. They'll be in good hands with Walgreens in the future."

Walgreens, which entered the Hawaii market a year ago with ambitious expansion plans, will open another pharmacy-only store in January at the former Valley Isle Pharmacy on Prison Street in Lahaina, and two more in Wailuku the same month.

Walgreens opened its first full-service Hawaii store in November 2007, on Keeaumoku Street, and opened a full-service store in Kaneohe last month. The company plans to open two more full-service Oahu stores, in Kalihi and Kailua, as well as two on Maui, in Lahaina and Kahului.

Walgreens, the nation's largest drugstore chain with 6,630 stores in 49 states, plans to eventually have 25 to 30 stores in Hawaii.