

# CONSUMER SPOTLIGHT

Public Utility News You Can Use

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## Nishina Appointed As Consumer Advocate


Dean Nishina has been named executive director of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs (DCCA) Division of Consumer Advocacy effective January 1. He has been serving as acting executive director since September 1, following the departure of Jeffrey Ono, who returned to private practice.

"We are extremely pleased that Dean has agreed to return as the state's Consumer Advocate," said Catherine Awakuni Colón, director of the DCCA.

"I look forward to continuing to advocate on behalf of the state's consumers in this dynamic period," said Nishina.

As the Consumer Advocate, Nishina will oversee the division's representation of consumer interests before the Hawaii Public Utilities Commission and other local and federal agencies.



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Kona residents attend the HELCO rate increase public hearing at West Hawaii Civic Center on December 14, 2016. (Docket No. 2015-0170)

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An electric vehicle recharges at a charging station. Pixabay image.

## ‘Drive Electric Hawaii’ Seeks Electric Vehicle Adoption

Eight key organizations have agreed to collaborate on electrification of ground transportation in Hawaii as an essential part of achieving the state’s clean energy goals.

Drive Electric Hawaii seeks to accelerate adoption of electric vehicles through coordinated collaboration and to make it easier to expand vehicle charging infrastructure in a way that brings more renewable energy onto the electric grid.

Founding participants who have signed the Memorandum of Understanding are: Blue Planet Foundation; Hawaii State Department of Transportation (HDOT); Hawaii State Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT); Hawaii State Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs—Division of Consumer Advocacy; the Hawaiian Electric Companies (including Maui Electric and Hawaii Electric Light); Kauai Island Utility Cooperative; Rocky Mountain Institute; and Ulupono Initiative.

“The primary focus of the Drive Electric Hawaii Initiative is to accelerate the cost-effective electrification of transportation in all passenger vehicles, public transit vehicles, and fleet vehicles...,” the memorandum states. “This effort will play a meaningful part toward the Hawaii Clean Energy Initiative objective of increasing energy security and self-sufficiency by eliminating Hawaii’s dependence on imported fuels for both electricity and ground transportation.”

Hawaii is second in the nation (after California) in per capita electric vehicle registrations and a leader in charging facilities. Despite low gasoline prices, plug-in passenger vehicles registered in the state increased 26 percent last year.

## Saving Through Advanced Power Strips

Advanced Power Strips (APS) look just like ordinary power strips, except that they have built-in features that are designed to reduce the amount of energy used by many consumer electronics.

There are several different types of APSs on the market, but they all operate on the same basic principle of shutting off the supply power to devices that are not in use.

By replacing your standard power strip with an APS, you can cut the amount of electricity used by your home office and entertainment center devices, and save money on your electric bill.



Many consumer electronics continue to draw power even when they are switched off. This is known as **vampire load**.

Vampire loads add up to about \$200 in yearly energy costs for an average home. This wasted energy could have powered 11,000,000 homes.

Use an APS for your entertainment center or home office that don’t need to be on while you’re away from home.

*Source: U.S. Department of Energy, National Renewable Energy Laboratory*



## Kaupulehu Water Company Files for Rate Increase

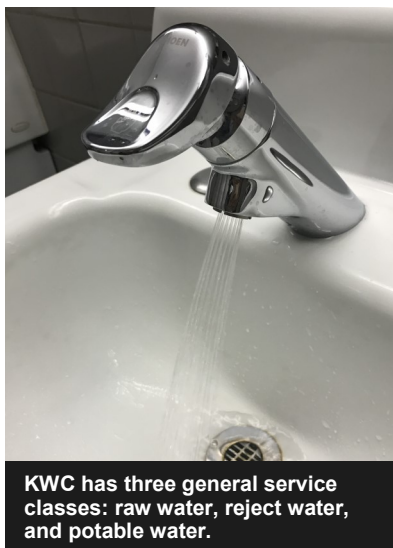
Kaupulehu Water Company (KWC), a regulated public utility that provides water utility services in the ahupuaa of Kaupulehu on Hawaii Island, has filed an application for rate increases with the Public Utilities Commission.

In its filing, KWC requests approval of the monthly water consumption charge for potable water from \$6.65 to \$7.63 per 1,000 gallons.

It also requests an approval for increases in its monthly meter charges, by meter size, citing the adjustment “is reflective of the safe maximum operating capacity of the various meter sizes. This is more in keeping with industry standards as they relate to the establishment of these meter charges.”

However, raw water (used for outdoor irrigation) has been adjusted down from \$6.65 to \$6.31 per 1,000 gallons.

*Docket No. 2016-0363*



KWC has three general service classes: raw water, reject water, and potable water.



iStock image

## HECO Companies Update Their Power Supply Improvement Plans

The Hawaiian Electric Companies outlined a detailed plans that chart possible paths to hitting the goal of 100 percent renewable energy in Hawaii by 2045.

The Power Supply Improvement Plan (PSIP) update, filed with the Public Utilities Commission, describes work that is in progress or planned over the next five years for each of the five islands served by the HECO Companies.

The companies forecast that they will exceed the state’s renewable energy milestones by attaining a renewable portfolio standard (RPS) of 48 percent by the end of 2020; the mandated goal is 30 percent.

The utility also forecasts to attain at least 72 percent by the end of 2030 and 100 percent by the end of 2040—all above the state’s RPS goals of 40 and 70 percent respectively.

Now, interested stakeholders will analyze the PSIP and ask questions about the plans to get a better understanding. The Consumer Advocate and other stakeholders will file comments on the plans on February 13. *Docket No. 2014-0183.*

***PUC Docket Numbers are included in these articles for further, in depth reading. PUC public filings are accessible online via the PUC’s Document Management System (DMS). Visit: <http://dms.puc.hawaii.gov/dms>***

# Beware of Unaffiliated Service for KIUC Members

Kauai Island Utility Cooperative (KIUC) customers who use Doxo, Inc. to pay their monthly bills will be subject to additional and unnecessary surcharges.

"KIUC is not in partnership with this company and has not authorized them to use our logo or materials," stated KIUC's Member Services Manager Maile Alfiler.

"KIUC members can pay their bills on-line without additional fees by using the cooperative's SmartHub service," said Alfiler. She added that with SmartHub you can receive a notification when your bill is generated and when payments have been made, view your bill online, manage payments, view energy usage and have access to KIUC updates.

For more information, visit the KIUC website at [www.kiuc.coop](http://www.kiuc.coop). For questions about your bill or payment options, call 246-4300.

## Upcoming Dates of Interest

- **Feb 15: LIHEAP (Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program) Action Day.** Learn more on our website: [cca.hawaii.gov/dca/hawaii-low-income-home-energy-assistance-program-liheap/](http://cca.hawaii.gov/dca/hawaii-low-income-home-energy-assistance-program-liheap/)
- **Feb 20: Presidents' Day** (State holiday, our office will be closed).
- **Mar 8: National Consumer Protection Week Fair.** DCA will have a booth at this fair held at our office courtyard from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- **Mar 22-24: Maui Energy Conference** at Maui Arts and Cultural Center. See details: [mauienergyconference.com](http://mauienergyconference.com)
- **Mar 27: Prince Kuhio Day** (State holiday, our office will be closed).



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