



# CONSUMER SPOTLIGHT

Public Utility News You Can Use

Issue 28 | December 2017



## Executive Director's Message

By Dean Nishina

The holiday season has quickly approached this year. DCA hopes everyone has a fun and safe holiday season. As we near the end of 2017, we look ahead to next year and how one of your resolutions can be lowering your utility costs and usage. See more tips on how to "slim down" on page 2.

The energy sector is ramping up next year with two new energy programs approved by the Public Utilities Commission that involve solar and battery storage. Hawaiian Electric Companies are also beginning the process of requesting energy project proposals. You can read more about both topics inside this edition of *Consumer Spotlight*.

Maui Electric Company recently filed its application for a rate increase. DCA looks forward to participating in the docket and ensuring that consumers' interests are at the forefront as the office begins its review process into the matter.

Wishing you and  
your ohana the  
merriest of  
holidays  
from the  
DCA staff!



Like

us!

[www.facebook.com/  
DCCA Hawaii](https://www.facebook.com/DCCA Hawaii)



DCA staff members toured the Young Brothers facility in October that included participating in a tug assist of a barge leaving Honolulu Harbor.

## In This Issue

- Slim Down for the New Year
- HECO Begins RFP Process
- PUC Approves Energy Programs
- Kaupulehu Water Rate Case Update
- MECO Rate Case

## Slim Down (in Utilities) for the New Year

As a New Year's resolution, you might want to start thinking



about ways to slim down your utility consumption that will lower bills and better conserve our Earth's resources. Here are a few ideas to start off 2018:

### Utility Audit

Look around your home and see if you could change to a CFL or LED lightbulb, fix a leaky pipe, what electronics could be put on a timer, and check on your aging water heater. A small fix could lead to big savings on your bills.

### TOU Rates

See if the Time-of-Use Rates option on your electric utility is right for you. This program allows some customers an opportunity to save based on their energy use habits. Contact HECO for more information about the program.

### ENERGY STAR®

Consider replacing old appliances with ENERGY STAR® ones. Look for the symbol on the appliance. It means it's more energy efficient than its counterpart.



Pixabay image.

## HECO Seeks Request for Proposals on Energy Projects

The Public Utilities Commission (PUC) has opened a new docket related to Hawaiian Electric Companies' (HECO) requests to proceed with competitive procurement of dispatchable firm generation and new renewable energy generation.



The order by the PUC grants HECO's request to start the regulatory process to issue requests for proposals (RFP). Stemming from its approved Power Supply Improvement Plan (PSIP), HECO intends to issue RFPs in two stages over the next two years for renewable resources it targeted through 2022 that include:

- 220 megawatts (MW) of renewable generation on Oahu
- 100 MW for the island of Maui, including 40 MW of firm renewable generation
- 50 MW for Hawaii Island

The draft documents, of primary interest to prospective renewable energy developers, may be reviewed at [www.hawaiianelectric.com/competitivebidding](http://www.hawaiianelectric.com/competitivebidding). Any comments by interested stakeholders on the draft RFPs can be submitted to the PUC by referencing the docket number.

Docket No. 2017-0352



**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>**



iStock image.

## PUC Approves Programs Expanding Solar and Battery Storage Opportunities

The Public Utilities Commission (PUC) approved two new programs that will expand opportunities for customers to install rooftop solar and battery energy storage systems and clarifies terms for customers who have already invested in a rooftop PV system.

The first program approved is the “Smart Export” program that offers a new option for customers. Under this program, a customer’s energy system will not receive a credit during the period from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. but will be compensated for energy exported during other hours. So, customers maximize their value by offsetting their own usage and exporting energy during peak hours.

The second program establishes “CGS+” as a successor to the popular Customer Grid Supply (CGS) program. CGS+ customers can install a solar PV system that exports energy to the electric grid during the daytime for a credit but will utilize advanced equipment that allows the electric utility to manage power from the CGS+ system. The equipment will help the utility to monitor the systems impact on other consumers and the entire electric grid.

The PUC has also authorized the addition of non-exporting systems to existing net energy metering (NEM) systems without affecting the eligibility as a NEM system. Additionally, the PUC authorized activation of new “advanced inverter” functions in PV and storage systems. These functions provide support to the electric grid during disturbances and will help maintain a stable and reliable grid.

*Docket No. 2014-0192*



## Kaupulehu Water Rate Case Update

Kaupulehu Water Company (KWC) is requesting relief in the form of the transfer of certain assets and a rate case proceeding.

The Consumer Advocate (CA), in its September Statement of Position, did not object to KWC’s requested transfer citing, in part, the need for the facilities to provide service to KWC’s customers. The CA did raise questions about the

proposed transaction that it planned to address in the rate case.

Then, in late October, the CA filed its testimonies in the rate case phase. In the filing, the CA raised a number of concerns with KWC’s requested rate increase. The CA’s office will continue to analyze KWC’s support for an increase as the application process moves forward.

*Docket No. 2016-0363*



Pixabay image.

# Maui Electric Company Files Application for Rate Increase



Maui Electric Company (MECO) is seeking approval of a general rate increase and certain revised rate schedules and rules. MECO's base rates were last adjusted following its 2012 test year rate case. The company seeks a 9.26 percent (or \$30,062,000) increase over revenues at current effective rates.

MECO's proposed revenue requirement in this rate case is \$354,860,000 which is \$64,027,000 less than it was in the 2012 test year. This is based on MECO's existing depreciation rates.

MECO's Maui Division requested increase in total operating revenues is 9.3 percent (or \$28,158,000), with its Lanai and Molokai divisions requesting increases of 9.2 percent (or \$979,000 and \$925,000, respectively) over revenues at current effective rates.



The utility filed its requested rate relief claiming that it's due to higher costs of operating and maintaining its infrastructure, achieving the State's clean energy objectives, and other administrative functions.

*Docket No. 2017-0150*

## Upcoming Dates of Interest

- **Nov 23: Thanksgiving** (State holiday, our office will be closed).
- **Nov 27-28, Nov 30, Dec 5: Public Hearings for The Gas Company Rate Increase Application** Visit DCA's website for locations and times: <http://cca.hawaii.gov/dca/>



- **Dec 25: Christmas Day** (State holiday, our office will be closed).
- **Jan 1: New Year's Day** (State holiday, our office will be closed).



- **Jan 15: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day** (State holiday, our office will be closed).

**Consumer Spotlight**  
Subscribe to DCA's newsletter

Subscribe on our website at [cca.hawaii.gov/dca/subscribe](http://cca.hawaii.gov/dca/subscribe).  
We also welcome feedback and story ideas. Email us at [dca@dcca.hawaii.gov](mailto:dca@dcca.hawaii.gov).

## Contact Us

### Division of Consumer Advocacy

P.O. Box 541  
Honolulu, HI 96809  
Phone: (808) 586-2800  
Fax: (808) 586-2780  
E-mail: [dca@dcca.hawaii.gov](mailto:dca@dcca.hawaii.gov)  
Web Address: [cca.hawaii.gov/dca](http://cca.hawaii.gov/dca)

## Also Visit:

### Public Utilities

#### Commission (PUC)

465 South King St.,  
Rm. 103  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
Phone: (808) 586-2020  
Fax: (808) 586-2066  
E-mail: [puc@hawaii.gov](mailto:puc@hawaii.gov)  
Web Address: [puc.hawaii.gov](http://puc.hawaii.gov)

### Federal

#### Communications

#### Commission (FCC)

445 12th St., SW  
Washington, DC 20554  
Toll-Free:  
1-888-225-5322  
E-mail: [fccinfo@fcc.gov](mailto:fccinfo@fcc.gov)  
Web Address: [www.fcc.gov/consumers](http://www.fcc.gov/consumers)

### Federal Energy

#### Regulatory Commission (FERC)

888 First St., NE  
Washington, DC 20426  
Toll-Free:  
1-866-208-3372  
E-mail: [customer@ferc.gov](mailto:customer@ferc.gov)  
Web Address: [www.ferc.gov](http://www.ferc.gov)