



# CONSUMER SPOTLIGHT

Public Utility News You Can Use

Issue 39 | October 2019



## Executive Director's Message

By Dean Nishina

This fall is all about energy! In September, we celebrated National Drive Electric Week, a time to bring awareness of electric vehicle options and how they impact our environment positively. Also, October is Energy Action Month. This is a great time to see how you can save energy at home and at work.

Two rate cases are highlighted in this newsletter—Hawaiian Electric Company (HECO) and Kalaeloa Water Company (KWC). HECO's last rate case was filed in 2016 but HECO has requested another rate increase. Meanwhile, the PUC held a public hearing for KWC's rate case at Kapolei Middle School. The public can still submit comments in writing. See the article on page 3 for details.

The PUC recently requested the Hawaii Natural Energy Institute to conduct a study on lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions. Read more on page 4 about how the study can affect regulation.



[www.facebook.com/DCCAHawaii](https://www.facebook.com/DCCAHawaii)

### Energy Action Month

In the month of October, Energy Action Month aims to bring awareness of the importance of energy in our daily lives. Read more on [Energy.gov](https://www.energy.gov).



Dean Nishina (right), Hawaii Consumer Advocate, appeared on Hawaii Public Radio's *The Conversation* with Catherine Cruz (left) on September 11.

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## HECO files request for approval of a rate increase

Hawaiian Electric (HECO) filed an application for a rate increase with the Public Utilities Commission (PUC). The request is for a 4.1 percent, or about \$77.5 million increase in revenues. HECO contends the increase on Oahu will help pay for operating and capital costs, including upgrades to strengthen the grid and integrate more renewable energy.

The rate filing is part of a required periodic regulatory review. The last rate review application was filed in 2016 and resulted in a decrease to customer rates overall, largely due to the pass-through of savings from federal tax law changes.

If HECO's current request is approved, HECO estimates a typical residential customer on Oahu using 500 kilowatt-hours a month would see an increase of \$8.67 a month.

HECO rates are "decoupled" – a regulatory model that is meant to weaken or break the link between a company's sales and revenues.

Docket No. 2019-0085

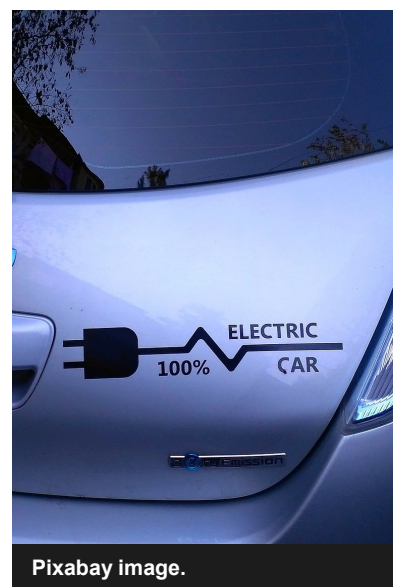
**PUC Docket Numbers are included in these articles for further, in depth reading. PUC public filings are accessible online via the PUC's Document Management System (DMS). Visit: <http://dms.puc.hawaii.gov/dms>**

## National Drive Electric Week rolls through September

National Drive Electric Week is a nationwide celebration to increase awareness of the availability of electric vehicles (EV). This year, it is celebrated between September 14-22. It highlights the benefits of all-electric and plug-in hybrid-electric cars, trucks, motorcycles, and more.

Locally, a handful of events were held statewide on Oahu, Kauai, and Kamuela and Hilo on Hawaii Island. Consumers learned more about how EVs can improve their lifestyle. It was also an opportunity to meet other EV owners, learn about their ownership experience, and to see the latest EVs. Even electric bikes were available to view at some events.

Visit Drive Electric Hawaii's website for more details about EVs: [www.driveelectricchi.com](http://www.driveelectricchi.com).



## How to avoid spoofing

You may not be able to tell right away if an incoming call is spoofed. Be extremely careful about responding to any request for personal identifying information.

The FCC's (Federal Communications Commission) has an informative infographic about spoofing on their website at [www.fcc.gov/spoofing](http://www.fcc.gov/spoofing).

Here are some things you can do if you think you are being spoofed:

- Use caution if being pressured for information.
- Never give personal information to unexpected callers.
- Make sure your voicemail has a password so spoofers cannot access it.
- If caller claims to be from a government agency, hang up and call agency to confirm the request.

Source: FCC

## DON'T GET SPOOFED!



### Recognize and Avoid SPOOFED CALLS

#### WHAT IS SPOOFING?

Spoofing occurs when someone fakes Caller ID details that appear on your phone to trick you into revealing personal information.

#### HOW DOES IT WORK?

Caller ID displays your caller's name and number. But it can be manipulated to make it seem someone else is calling.



DCA staff members toured the Kalaeloa Water Company LLC plant which provides water and wastewater services.

## Kalaeloa Water Company LLC seeks general rate increase

In a recent filing, Kalaeloa Water Company LLC (KWC) has asked the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) to approve a rate increase and revised rules, regulations, and rates.

KWC seeks a net overall revenue increase of \$485,107 for its water and wastewater operations during the July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020 test year which represents an approximate 14.32 percent increase over the pro forma revenue amount of \$3,388,497 at present rates during the test year.

KWC represents that its proposed net overall revenue increase would provide it with an opportunity to earn 7.75 percent overall rate of return on its system improvements and capital investments.

A public hearing was held on September 17 at Kapolei Middle School to receive in-person testimony from the general public regarding KWC's application. Written statements can still be made via postal mail or email to the PUC. Visit the PUC's website for more information: <http://puc.hawaii.gov/contact/public-comments/>.

KWC provides water and wastewater utility services to customers located within a 3,753 acre redevelopment district of Kalaeloa on the island of Oahu.

Docket No. 2019-0057

# PUC Requests HNEI to Analyze Lifecycle Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Energy Projects

The Public Utilities Commission (PUC) has asked Hawaii Natural Energy Institute (HNEI) to conduct a study on the lifecycle greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from various energy products and technologies.

The objective is to provide a Hawaii-specific assessment of GHG emissions for the relevant technologies and energy sources for use by the PUC to support regulatory decisions for the State's electric and gas utilities.

The PUC requests that HNEI assemble an Advisory Group of local and national experts on this study and to participate in the study planning and analytic work as appropriate. It also asks HNEI to engage collaboratively with a diverse group of local stakeholders during the whole process, but particularly to review the scope of work and results.

Specifically, the PUC seeks recommendations on estimating lifecycle GHG emissions from such areas including but not limited to electricity, gas products, and energy storage systems.

## Upcoming Dates of Interest

- **October: National Energy Action Month** Take steps to reduce your carbon footprint and minimize energy consumption.
- **Oct 31: Halloween** I hear a light bulb is a bright idea for a costume.
- **Nov 11: Veteran's Day** (State holiday, our office will be closed).
- **Nov 28: Thanksgiving** (State holiday, our office will be closed).



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## Also Visit:

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### Federal Communications Commission (FCC)

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### Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC)

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