



**Hawaiian
Electric**

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Hawaiian Electric launches Public Safety Power Shutoff program to enhance wildfire safety

- *Starting July 1, Hawaiian Electric is launching its Public Safety Power Shutoff program to reduce the risk of wildfire.*
- *As part of this program, Hawaiian Electric may preemptively shut off power in certain areas it has identified as high risk during periods of forecast high winds and dry conditions. This program is our last line of defense to keep communities safe and may result in extended power outages.*
- *The program will start in areas that Hawaiian Electric has determined present higher wildfire risk factors. In the future, Hawaiian Electric intends to expand the program to cover all high-risk areas served by Hawaiian Electric.*
- *This program is just one component of Hawaiian Electric's three-phase Wildfire Safety Strategy.*

HONOLULU, May 29, 2024 – With the dry, summer months ahead, Hawaiian Electric is expanding its Wildfire Safety Strategy by launching a Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) program. Starting July 1, Hawaiian Electric may preemptively shut off power in areas that appear at high risk of wildfire during periods of forecast high winds and dry conditions to help reduce the risk of wildfires.

“Wildfires have been recognized as a top hazard facing Hawai‘i. Hawaiian Electric has responded with a multi-pronged approach to mitigating wildfire risk. One component is proactively shutting off power, which is a last line of defense to protect the community. We understand shutting off power can create hardships for affected customers, so this is not something we take lightly,” said Jim Alberts, Hawaiian Electric senior vice president and chief operations officer.

The program will start in the following areas:

- O‘ahu: Wai‘anae, Mākaha, Nānākuli, Mā‘ili, and Ka‘ena Point (approximately 2,700 customers)
- Hawai‘i Island: North Hawai‘i between Kohala (below 18 mile marker) and Waikoloa, in West Hawai‘i between Kalaoa and Hōlualoa, and between Mauna Kea Access Road and Waiki‘i Ranch (approximately 19,300 customers)
- Maui County: West Maui, Upcountry, parts of Central and South Maui, and parts of central Moloka‘i (approximately 26,100 customers)

These initial starting areas have a combination of risk factors for wildfires, including exposure to strong winds, dry conditions, vegetation prone to wildfires, and historically higher rates of wildfires. Over time, Hawaiian Electric will expand this program to all high-risk areas on the islands that it serves. For more information and maps, call Hawaiian Electric’s PSPS hotline at 1-844-483-8666 toll-free or go to hawaiianelectric.com/PSPS.

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A PSPS will only be activated in an area if weather data, including statements from the National Weather Service, indicate conditions for heightened wildfire risk. These conditions may include strong winds, low humidity and dry vegetation. Combined, these factors can result in downed trees or flying debris contacting power lines and damaging electrical infrastructure, which can create the risk of wildfires.

Before activating a PSPS, Hawaiian Electric will notify the public and coordinate with government officials, first responders and emergency response agencies. Hawaiian Electric will provide public notifications through news releases, social media, online outage maps and updates to its website. If weather conditions change suddenly, shutoff may occur with little or no notice.

During a PSPS activation, power will remain shut off so long as hazardous weather conditions persist. When the weather improves, power lines must be inspected and any damage must be repaired before service can be restored. This may involve ground crews and aerial inspections using helicopters and drones. This process may result in extended outages lasting several hours, possibly even days depending on the location and extent of any damage.

Shutting off power, even to reduce wildfire risks, has broad impacts across the community. Hawaiian Electric has coordinated with stakeholders from across government and the private sector, including emergency response agencies, government officials, essential service providers and businesses, to ensure public awareness and safety during a PSPS activation.

Customers on life support with special medical needs are urged to prepare now for the possibility of extended power outages. Hawaiian Electric asks those customers to provide their contact information to receive future notifications in advance of a PSPS by submitting an online Medical Needs Communications Form at hawaiianelectric.com/PSPS.

Looking ahead, Hawaiian Electric plans to continue to enhance and refine its PSPS program to make it more targeted and effective. These plans currently include implementing additional enhanced technology, weather forecasting targeting high-risk areas, customer education, plans for backup for critical customers, and community hubs and resources.

The PSPS program is just one component of Hawaiian Electric's three-phase Wildfire Safety Strategy. As part of the first phase, the company has already implemented changes in high-risk areas, including:

- During hazardous weather conditions, deploying spotters to strategic locations in risk areas to watch for ignition.
- If a fault or disturbance is detected on a circuit, automatically shutting off power lines in risk areas until crews visually confirm that it is safe to restore power. This may result in longer outages in some areas, including outages that last overnight.

The second phase includes work that is underway, or will soon be underway, to harden the grid against a variety of extreme weather events and reduce potential hazards. That work includes:

- Expanding inspections of poles and lines, using helicopters, drones, infrared and ground inspection.

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- Addressing sag and tension in lines and adding spacers to reduce the potential for sparking.
- Switching from single-strand copper to aluminum wire or covered conductor in some areas.
- Replacing wood poles with steel poles in some areas.
- Continuing vegetation management efforts adjacent to power lines.
- Using fault current indicators, quickly identifying the location of faults.
- Installing cameras and weather sensors in critical areas.

Additionally, Hawaiian Electric is advancing work on its \$190 million grid resilience plan to harden against wildfires, hurricanes, tsunamis and flooding, and to adapt to climate change impacts. Half of this multi-year program is to be paid by the federal government with the other half matched by customers.

The third phase will be longer term and will use a variety of tools to address continuing and emerging threats from extreme weather and climate change. Some of those tools are expected to include:

- Providing more precision in wildfire-focused weather forecasting and risk-modeling.
- Undergrounding power lines in strategic at-risk areas.
- Expanding use of covered power lines, fast-acting fuses and fire-resistant poles and equipment.
- Seeking support for expanded hazard tree removal, wider rights-of-way, and rights of access for clearing vegetation that threatens equipment.
- Ongoing collaboration with fire departments and emergency management agencies to refine the overall strategy.
- Seeking more federal funding for wildfire defense programs.

For more information about Hawaiian Electric's wildfire safety strategy, go to: hawaiianelectric.com/wildfiresafety.

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