



Hawaiian Electric
Maui Electric
Hawai'i Electric Light

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Metallic confetti causes overnight outage for 300; balloons caused outages affecting 42,000 in 2016

HONOLULU, May 16, 2017 – Metallic streamers sprayed from a “confetti cannon” onto power lines caused an outage that affected about 300 customers in the Keeaumoku area early today. With school graduations underway, the Hawaiian Electric Companies are urging the public to hold onto metallic balloons and to never release balloons or other items near power lines.

Last year, metallic balloons entangled in power lines caused 30 outages, affecting 42,161 customers in the Hawaiian Electric Companies’ service areas.

Here is the breakdown of metallic balloon outages in 2016:

- 25 on O’ahu affecting 37,221 customers
- Three in Maui County affecting 3,977
- Two on Hawai’i Island affecting 963

These balloon-related outages spike in May and June during graduation season. Since 2008, there has been an average of 16 outages each year on O’ahu. Last year’s 25 incidents on O’ahu nearly hit the record 26 set in 2013.

The outage today occurred about 1:15 a.m., affecting residences and businesses around Sam Sung Plaza, 655 Keeaumoku St. A Hawaiian Electric troubleshooter arrived and found metallic streamers that had fallen onto an electric transformer; witnesses said someone had used an air cannon to shoot the streamers onto power lines above the transformer. A crew was called to remove the streamers from the lines and power was restored to most customers by 3:15 a.m.

Metallic balloons and streamers can cause a short circuit and knock out power to an entire neighborhood. In February, a metallic balloon came into contact with power lines in Kahului, which caused an outage that affected 17,310 customers.

Keep these safety tips in mind:

- Make sure the balloon’s string or ribbon is securely tied to it.
- Add a weight to the end of the string or ribbon.
- Never release balloons into the sky or shoot anything at a power line.
- Deflate balloons after your celebration.

-more-

Anyone spotting a metallic balloon in a power line should not try to free it. It can be reported by calling the Hawaiian Electric Companies' trouble lines:

- Hawaiian Electric at 1-855-304-1212
- Maui Electric at 808-871-7777 (Maui) or 877-871-8461 (Moloka'i, Lāna'i)
- Hawai'i Electric Light at 808-969-6666

FOLLOW US FOR THE LATEST:

