



Hawaiian Electric
Maui Electric
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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Hawaiian Electric Companies urge public to keep metallic balloons and streamers away from power lines

Metallic items caught in equipment can cause outages, damage

HONOLULU, May 10, 2018 – With school graduations underway, the Hawaiian Electric Companies are urging well-wishers and graduates to hold onto metallic balloons and refrain from setting off “confetti cannons” near power lines and other utility equipment.

Outages related to metallic balloons are a concern for Hawaiian Electric, Maui Electric and Hawai'i Electric Light, especially in May and June when most graduations take place. This time last year, Hawaiian Electric responded to a Ke'eaumoku-area outage caused by metallic streamers from a confetti cannon landing on a transformer. So far in 2018, eight balloon-related outages have occurred on O'ahu and one in Maui County.

Here is a breakdown of metallic balloon/streamer outages in 2017 as compared to 2016:

- 11 on O'ahu, down from 25
- Two in Maui County, down from three
- Two on Hawai'i Island, unchanged from 2016

Metallic balloons and streamers can cause a short circuit and knock out power to an entire neighborhood. On April 9, a metallic balloon caught in a power line on Fort Weaver Road left nearly 1,500 customers in 'Ewa Beach without power for 40 minutes. About 750 Maui Electric customers in the Waiehu area briefly lost service when a metallic balloon touched a power line on Jan. 25.

Keep these safety tips in mind:

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

Do not try to free a metallic balloon in contact with a power line. Report it to 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

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