



**Hawaiian
Electric**

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Hawaiian Electric sees drop in demand during pandemic

HONOLULU, April 9, 2020 – Hawaiian Electric has seen a significant reduction in use of electricity as tourism activities cease, businesses close and thousands of residents stay home to slow the spread of COVID-19.

For O‘ahu, the average system peak demand (the point of highest energy use) for the week of March 22 was 7 percent less than in previous weeks. On Maui, the decrease was 14 percent and on Hawai‘i Island, it was 7 percent.

Gov. David Ige issued a stay-at-home order on March 23 and soon after imposed a quarantine on visitors, essentially shutting down arrivals.

The reduction in weekday, daytime peak demand on Maui and O‘ahu was especially pronounced as schools, offices, government buildings, hotels and businesses closed. Peak daytime demand fell 21 percent on Maui and 16 percent on O‘ahu after March 22. Maui saw record lows for daytime generation on sunny days when private rooftop solar systems were supplying the most energy.

“Such fast and pronounced changes in demand are something we haven’t seen before and they’re a measure of how quickly business activity and individual behavior were affected by the pandemic,” said Jim Kelly, vice president of corporate relations at Hawaiian Electric. “Hawai‘i reflects the trends that utilities everywhere are seeing as economies adjust to the impacts of COVID-19.”

Kelly said adequate supply of electricity isn’t something customers should worry about for the duration of the emergency. “Especially with consumption down, we have plenty of generation resources available,” he said.

On O‘ahu, the reduction in demand means about 200,000 fewer gallons of oil per day are being used to generate electricity.

Data released this week by the University of Chicago found consumption of electricity in the U.S. is down 5 percent from December 2019. In areas hard hit like New York City, consumption has fallen 14 percent since February and in Southern California, it’s down about 10 percent.

Related to the reduction in electricity demand is a huge drop in particulate emissions worldwide.

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The University of Chicago researchers say particulates from power generation are down 72 percent since December, including a nearly 200 percent reduction in China. Details can be found at <https://epic.uchicago.edu/area-of-focus/covid-19/>

Hawaiian Electric remains operational for generation, emergency repairs and utility maintenance and construction. Other activities – including customer service information and payment processing, customer installations and rooftop solar application processing—remain available online, by phone or mail.

Service disconnections have been suspended through May 17. Customers who are having difficulty paying their bill due to the coronavirus pandemic are encouraged to contact the company to make a payment arrangement.

The quickest way to start the process is to fill out and submit a Payment Arrangement Request Form at <https://www.hawaiianelectric.com/customerserviceoptions>.

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