



New Year's resolutions to keep



What's a new year without New Year's resolutions? Here's one goal we'd like to add to your list — **"Use energy more efficiently."** We know, we know. Like losing five pounds or getting more exercise, it's a resolution that sounds good, but all too often slips through the cracks. It's really not that hard. Little steps do make a difference. Here are several energy saving tips to help you start off the new year right:

- Cover liquids and moist food in your refrigerator. The moisture can make the compressor work harder, using more energy.
- Thaw frozen food in the refrigerator. While thawing, it helps to keep the refrigerator cool.
- Remove all heavy wrapping paper before storing food. Paper acts as an insulator, prolonging the time it takes food to cool.
- When using the self-cleaning cycle on an electric oven, start the cycle right after cooking while the oven is still hot. At the very least, wait until the late evening hours when the use of electricity is lowest.
- Preheat the oven for baked products like breads, cakes and pastries so they will rise properly. Preheating is NOT necessary for food requiring long cooking times, such as roasts, turkeys or casseroles.
- Match the size of cookware to the surface unit on your stove. The bottom of the pan should cover the element, but not extend more than one inch beyond the outer ring of the element.
- Take short five minute showers instead of tub baths. Filling the bath tub may take over 25 gallons of hot water.
- Repair leaking faucets. A leaking hot water faucet wastes both water and electricity.
- Install low-flow showerhead faucets and faucet aerators to reduce water consumption and save money.



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We've come a long way, baby

With all the talk of a new millennium, it's worth noting that electrotechnology has become much more efficient over the past decades. Did you know*:

- A microwave oven can cook a meal using up to 90 percent less energy than a conventional oven.
- Induction cooktops lower energy use by up to 60 percent.
- Compact fluorescent bulbs consume 75 percent less electricity than incandescents.
- Refrigerators made today consume 80 to 90 percent less electricity than those built in the late 70's, and
- Electric heat pumps can now return up to \$3 in heating/cooling for each \$1 spent to run them.

*Information from the Edison Electric Institute

YAHOO! ANOTHER SITE FOR E-BILL

Last month we announced that HELCO has teamed up with CheckFree, the nation's leading provider of electronic commerce service, to offer our new E-Bill service. With this service, you can view — and pay — your electric bill online via the Internet. E-Bill is free when you pay your bill through the CheckFree E-Bill web site or through links from HELCO's web site.

We've got more good news. Now you can view and pay your HELCO bill and other bills through Yahoo! Bill Pay at <http://bills.yahoo.com>. Yahoo! is the latest addition to the list of many other online sites. Note that Yahoo! charges a small fee for customers to receive and pay bills via their site. However, if you're already using Yahoo! for bill payment, you may find it more convenient to receive and pay all of your bills via this one site rather than logging on to multiple Internet sites.

For more information on HELCO's E-Bill service, visit the website at <http://www.heco.com>.



Purchasing a home in 2000?

Did you know that having a solar water heating system in your new home may lower your monthly out-of-pocket expenses? The slight increase in monthly mortgage payment can be more than offset by the electricity savings. The result: More money to be spent on other things. Incorporating a solar water heating system in your new home makes sense! Talk to your developer or contractor or call HELCO at **969-0127** for more information.



Submitting a damage claim

Look for the flyer in this month's electric bill that explains how to make a claim if you have losses due to a power outage.

As a reminder, the rules of HELCO's tariff, approved by the Public Utilities Commission, say that you have a responsibility to protect your equipment. Consider devices like surge suppressors or an uninterruptible power supply (UPS) to protect your computers and other sensitive electronic equipment.

Information you should know

Wondering what you should do if you're by a fallen power line? Or what to do during an emergency if the power goes out in your home? HELCO has two handy informational cards on "Electrical Safety" and "Electrical Emergency." You can pick up copies at our Hilo, Waimea and Kona Customer Service offices.

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Microwave Tofu Turkey Hash

- 6 shiitake mushrooms, soaked
- 1 block (20 oz) soft tofu, cut in half lengthwise
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- 1 lb ground turkey
- 3 tablespoons oyster sauce
- 1/2 cup chopped green onions
- 1/4 cup chopped Chinese parsley
- 1 teaspoon sesame oil
- 1 egg, beaten
- Dash of garlic salt
- Dash of pepper

Remove and discard mushroom stems; sliver caps. Drain tofu halves well; place in bottom of a microwave-safe dish. Pour soy sauce over tofu. Combine remaining ingredients; spoon over tofu and pat lightly. Cover dish with plastic wrap and microwave on high power for about 10 minutes or until turkey is cooked. Makes 6 servings.

