



HELCO SIGNS *Energy Star* ALLIANCE

Thanks to HELCO's new alliance with the Environmental Protection Agency's *Energy Star* program, installing solar water heating in a new home will be more affordable than ever. The *Energy Star* program is a federal program designed to encourage energy efficiency and support environmentally-friendly technologies. Soon, new and existing homes constructed with HELCO-approved solar water heating systems will qualify for the *Energy Star* designation, making home buyers eligible for special financing breaks.



Discussions are still taking place with lenders to determine what financing advantages they will offer in Hawaii, but the *Energy Star* label could mean more liberal qualifying requirements for mortgage approval, or possibly lower interest rates and/or closing costs.



"The *Energy Star* program not only has the potential of making solar water heating more affordable on new homes,

but also of allowing more people the opportunity to qualify for a new home loan through financial assistance from participating lending institutions," said Pat Moore, HELCO's solar water heating program manager.

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The *Energy Star* benefits are in addition to a \$1,000 incentive from HELCO to help bring down the cost of installing solar water heating and a 35% Hawaii State tax credit available to the homeowner. HELCO's Residential Efficient Water Heating solar program combined with the *Energy Star* Program means there has never been a better time to install solar water heating. Solar can reduce your water heating costs by 90%, with the potential of lowering your electric bill. For more information on the HELCO's *Energy Star* alliance and our solar rebate program, call 969-0127.



Tell us your story

Do you have some energy-saving tips to share with your neighbors and fellow electric customers? Maybe you've installed a heat pump or solar water heater and have seen big savings on your electric bill. Perhaps you've come up with some creative ways to get the teenager in your family to take shorter, cooler showers.

Consumer Lines wants to share your stories with our other customers. Write to: Corporate Communications, P.O. Box 2750, Honolulu, HI 96840. Give us your name, address, brief description of the energy saving actions and a phone number where you can be reached weekdays.



Right tree, right place

If you're doing a little spring planting, selecting the right trees for the right location will help ensure you get years of satisfaction from your landscape. A little preparation goes a long way. Consider these environmental and safety issues to choose the best trees for your yard.

What function will the tree serve?
Trees can provide energy-saving shade, wind breaks, privacy, erosion control and of course, aesthetic beauty.

How much space does the tree have to grow?

- As a general rule, avoid planting trees directly beneath power lines or in front of electric meters. Remember the 30-foot rule: *Trees and plants within 30 feet of overhead power lines should not be higher than 30 feet when full grown.*
- Identify all underground utilities before digging or planting. Planting trees over underground power lines can be dangerous.
- Plant trees away from solar collectors to get the maximum light or heat energy from the sun.
- Avoid planting trees that can grow over roofs and rain gutters, creating maintenance problems.
- Select trees for use near pools that do not drop leaves that will fall or blow into the pool.
- Ensure that large trees will not grow over or shade out smaller trees, shrubs and groundcovers.
- Don't plant large trees near driveways, roadways, curbs, walls, sidewalks or underground utilities where their roots may cause damage.



POWER TIPS

Spring cleaning can save energy

Spring is almost here and for a lot of folks that means spring cleaning. While you're airing out the closets and sweeping up the carport, take a second look around the house. Some cleanups can save you money on your electric bill.

Break the ice. If your freezer doesn't have an automatic defrost feature, defrost it when the ice is a quarter of an inch thick. Too much ice forces the compressor to run longer to keep food cold.

Clean your coils. Dust on your refrigerator or freezer coils acts as insulation. Result: More energy is used. The warm condenser coils are usually located behind the front bottom grill panel or on the back of the refrigerator or freezer. Be sure to turn the unit off first.

Organize your fridge. Keep foods arranged so you don't waste time and cold air looking for what you want. Put snacks for the kids on a lower shelf so they can get them out quickly.

Check the clothes dryer vent or duct. Remove obstructions which can add to drying time or energy used.

Microwave cleanups help, too. Keep the inside surface of your microwave oven clean. It will cook more efficiently.

Follow these tips and this year's spring cleaning could pay off in more ways than one.

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Lemon or Lime Sorbet

- 2 cups water
- 2 cups sugar
- 1-1/4 cups fresh lemon or lime juice



In a medium saucepan, bring the water and sugar to a boil. Stir until sugar dissolves. Cool; add juice. Freeze in an electric ice cream maker, following manufacturer's directions. Makes 6 servings.

If ice cream maker is not available, line a 13 x 9 x 2 - inch pan with plastic wrap. Pour mixture in prepared pan and freeze overnight. Cut frozen mixture into cubes and process in a food processor to sorbet consistency. Freeze again before serving.

