



MECO SIGNS *Energy Star* ALLIANCE

Thanks to MECO'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 homes constructed with MECO-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.

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The *Energy Star* benefits are in addition to a \$1,000 incentive from MECO to help bring down the cost of installing solar water heating in a new home and a 35% Hawaii State tax credit available to the homeowner. MECO's solar program has lead to over 2,000 solar water heaters installed on Maui, Lanai and Molokai since the program began in 1996. Solar can reduce your water heating costs by 90%, cutting your electric bill way down. For more information on MECO's *Energy Star* alliance and its solar water heating program, call toll-free 1-888-MECOSUN (632-6786).

Solar helps the ARC of Maui



The Association of Retarded Citizens (ARC) of Maui is now enjoying the benefits of a solar water heater for its Kihei facility. In the system's first full month of operation, the home saw a 25% drop in its energy use. The new solar water heating system was paid for with a grant from the Atherton Foundation, which Maui Electric helped to coordinate, and a \$1000 MECO cash incentive as part of its solar water heating program.

The ARC provides community-based group homes for about 24 mentally challenged adults. A team of professionals develops individual care plans tailored to each client's special needs, including housekeeping, academic tutoring, and employment opportunities.

MECO supports the ARC of Maui's efforts in the community and its decision to make its energy dollars go further. Call MECO's Customer Service Department at **871-8461** to find out how we can help your family or business do the same.



When the heat's on, save your energy

Considering buying an air conditioner to cool you off in the hot summer months ahead? If so, proper sizing and efficiency are two important issues to consider. The Energy Efficiency Ratio, or EER, is used to rate the efficiency of an air conditioner. The Hawaii Model Energy Code defines room air conditioners with an EER of 9.0 or higher as energy efficient. If you are planning to buy an air conditioner, Maui Electric wants to make sure you choose an energy efficient model. To encourage you, we'll be including **discount coupons** for efficient air conditioners with your electric bill **next month**.

Proper sizing is just as important as efficiency. Using an air conditioner that is too large can leave the air feeling clammy. Choosing an air conditioner that is undersized won't properly cool the area. To help you learn how to choose the right sized air conditioner for your room, MECO has developed the *Guide to Efficient Air Conditioning*. For a copy of the guide or for more information, call us at **871-8461** on Maui, **553-3234** on Molokai, or **565-6445** on Lanai.



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 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. 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.*
- Do not dig or plant until you identify all underground utilities. Don't plant trees over underground power lines.
- Look for other obstacles that could restrict the growth of your tree or be damaged by your tree.
- Don't plant 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.

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.

