



Protect your equipment

In today's electronic world, even momentary power fluctuations can affect the sensitive electronic devices we use at home and at work.

While at MECO, we do everything we can to prevent them, power problems beyond our control do occur. That's where your responsibility comes in. Just as you buy insurance for protection from possible health, fire or other problems, you should take steps to protect your computers, motors and other sensitive electronic equipment from power problems.



What can you do?

Buy equipment that is already protected.

Check to see if the equipment you're buying includes a display carry-over feature or a battery backup. This eliminates blinking digital displays on microwaves, VCRs and radio alarm clocks.

Use surge suppressors. They'll protect against most short voltage surges.

- Look for suppressors with a status indicator, or LED light. This is different from an on/off switch. The status indicator will tell you whether the protection feature is ready to block a voltage surge.
- Use a suppressor that complies with the Underwriters Laboratories (UL) 1449, second edition, 1998 standard.
- Don't plug in equipment that exceeds the power rating (wattage or amps) of a surge suppressor.
- Replace surge suppressors that show signs of overheating, such as discoloration or a burnt smell.
- Do not plug multiple outlet surge suppressors together. You may overload the circuit and void the manufacturer's warranty.
- For equipment that uses a phone line, such as an answering machine, computer (with modem), FAX machine or home security system, get a suppressor with telephone connectors. For your TV and VCR, there are suppressors with a TV satellite dish/cable/antenna connectors.

Consider an Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS) device. A UPS comes with a rechargeable battery positioned between the electronic equipment and the power source. It kicks in to provide power for a period of time if your main power goes out. A UPS makes most sense for computers and other business equipment, especially if you have a home office.

Put large appliances on a dedicated circuit, separate from computers and other sensitive equipment. This will help isolate sensitive equipment from power fluctuations caused when a major appliance restarts (such as refrigerators or room air conditioners). These appliances use large motors that draw a lot of electric current when they cycle on. This "in-rush" of current may even cause your lights to flicker or your UPS to "beep." Large central air conditioning systems are even more likely to cause these problems so be sure to consult with your air conditioning supplier about the issue before installing.

For more information on what causes power problems and what you can do about them, visit the website at <http://heco.com>.



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MECO Community Fair

Join us for the next MECO in Our Community fair.

WHEN:
Saturday, 9/9/2000

WHERE:
Kaahumanu Shopping Center

TIME:
10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

There'll be activities and displays about everything from how to save money on your electric bill to electrical safety and renewable energy. Check out the hands-on energy games for the kids, free giveaways and entertainment. Meet MECO's new mascot, Captain Electron and help McGruff celebrate his 20th year in Hawaii! See you there!

A tip for faster service

If you're paying your bill in person at our customer service offices, our cashiers can provide you even faster service if you bring in your entire electric bill. Also, don't forget to write your account number on your check. This will help ensure that the proper account is credited.

That beeping UPS!

An Uninterruptible Power Supply may "beep" when it switches to battery power. The battery mode may activate when there's simply a minor change in voltage. Minor voltage fluctuations result from ordinary events like a room air conditioner starting up or the normal switching that occurs on MECO's electric system. Fluctuations also occur when the protective devices on our system do their job. This automatic sensing equipment detects potentially dangerous conditions on the system and breaks the flow of electricity for a split second. This very brief break protects essential parts of the electric delivery system from major damage and helps prevent longer outages.

As a general rule, you probably don't need to be concerned about an occasional "beep" from your UPS. If it beeps continuously, have an electrician check your home wiring or call MECO for a power check.



Get your bills wherever you are

Going away for awhile? No problem. As long as you have Internet access, you can review and pay your bills from anywhere in the country. Sign up and every month your electric bill will be posted at a secured Internet site, allowing you to view your bill and pay it on line! Avoid the hassle of stopping or forwarding your bills.

You can find your MECO bills at a number of secured web sites that you may already be using, including Yahoo! To sign up to review and pay your bills at Yahoo! Bill Pay, visit their site at <http://bills.yahoo.com>.

There are other web sites that you can use to review and pay your bills. To see the list of sites or for more information regarding E-bill, visit the website at www.heco.com.



RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Tangy Tako Pupu

- 1 lb cooked tako (octopus)
- 1/4 cup lemon or lime juice
- 1/3 cup soy sauce
- 1/4 teaspoon sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1 Kula onion (sweet onion), sliced
- 1/4 cup chopped green onions
- 1/4 cup chopped limo limo (a variety of seaweed)
- 1 chili pepper, chopped
- 1 teaspoon grated ginger root (optional)



Thinly slice tako; place in a bowl. Combine remaining ingredients; add to tako and mix well. Let stand for 30 minutes before serving. Makes 6 servings.

