








A powerful force

Electricity – where would we be without it? It's indispensable at home and on the job. No question, electricity is a powerful force. In more ways than one. Despite all that electricity does for us, we need to remember that such a powerful force can be dangerous. This month, HELCO wants to remind you of some important electrical safety tips.

Watch your conduct

Electricity always looks for the easiest path to the ground. The most common conductor of electricity is copper or aluminum wire. Water is another conductor. Since our bodies are made up of about 70% water, we too are conductors.

-  Don't stand in water when using any electrical appliance or tool.
-  Keep appliances like radios, televisions or hair dryers away from sinks and bathtubs.
-  Never insert a metal object or your hands into an appliance without unplugging it.
-  Never plug or unplug an electric cord while your hands are wet.
-  Use GFCI (Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter) outlets

Also in this issue:

[Uncle Sam may owe you \\$\\$](#)

[A photovoltaic \(PV\) system workshop](#)





[Sun Power to shine on more schools](#)

[No post-dated checks please](#)






[Save loads of energy on laundry days!](#)

[Recipe of the month](#)

Electrical safety indoors

-  Don't overload outlets and extension cords. Check the wattage on your appliance labels. In general, try to keep the total loads on one outlet or extension cord at less than 1500 watts.
-  Keep extension cords away from moisture or heat. And don't hide them under rugs. Short circuits resulting from a damaged cord may set the carpet on fire.
-  Regularly check wires, extension cords and appliances for signs of wear.
-  When buying power tools, look for the approval label of a recognized testing laboratory, such as Underwriters Laboratories.

And outdoors...

-  Keep ladders, antennas, fruit pickers, kites, model airplanes and Mylar balloons away from overhead power lines.
-  Never climb power poles, transmission towers or street lights.
-  Trimming trees near overhead lines can be fatal; call us at **969-6666** to make arrangements to help you do this safely.
-  Digging in areas served by underground lines can be dangerous. Before excavating in your property, please call us at **969-6666**.
-  In a storm or auto accident, if a downed power line falls on your car, stay inside the car. If you need to get out of the car, jump out of it without touching the car and the ground at the same time. Shuffle or hop away from your car, don't walk away. Otherwise the electricity may find a path to the ground through you.

Uncle Sam may owe you \$\$

If you worked during 2002, and your income is below certain limits, you may be eligible for an Earned Income Credit. Working families who earned less than \$34,178 in 2002 may receive as much as \$4,140 if they have more than one qualifying child. Families earning less than \$30,201 with one qualifying child may receive as much as \$2,506. Individuals earning less than \$11,060, or couples earning less than \$12,060 with no qualifying children, may receive as much as \$376.

To get the credit you need to file a federal income tax return. You may receive your refund in half the time when you file electronically. For more information, refer to Publication 596, Earned Income Credit at www.irs.gov or call **1-800-829-3676** to get a free copy.

COMING UP...

A photovoltaic (PV) system workshop

WHERE: Natural Energy Laboratory of Hawaii Authority (NELHA) meeting room
73-4460 Queen Kaahumanu Highway, Kailua, Kona (South of Kona Airport, near the ocean)

WHEN: April 3, 4 and 5, 2003

FEE: \$60

As team leader of the Island of Hawaii Million Solar Roofs Initiative Partnership, HELCO is pleased to sponsor a workshop for electricians, contractors, solar vendors and interested members of the general public versed in electricity on Designing and Installing Code-Compliant Photovoltaic (PV) Systems. The workshop is made possible by a U.S. Department of Energy grant. For more information call **969-0118**. Space is limited; pre-registration is recommended.

Sun Power to shine on more schools

At the end of last year, HELCO announced it was extending the *Sun Power for Schools* program for two more years. So far, a total of 17 public high and intermediate schools throughout the state are benefiting from the program in two ways: The solar-generated electricity helps to meet a small portion of the schools' electricity needs and students get first hand experience with a renewable energy system in their own schools. Plans are underway to install a photovoltaic (solar electric) system in the first Big Island intermediate school this year.

With your help, we can keep this momentum going. For as little as \$1 more a month on your electric bill, you can help more schools participate. Just fill out and sign the enclosed postage-paid *Sun Power for Schools* reply card. For more information, call **969-0137**.

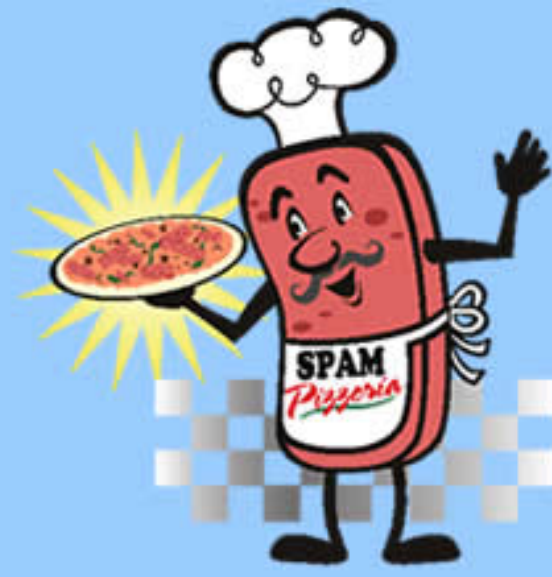
No post-dated checks please

HELCO cannot accept post-dated checks for bill payments. Here's why: Paying your electric bill with a post-dated check slows down the processing of your payment. The post-dated check may be rejected by your bank and returned to us. This delay will keep you from receiving timely credit for your payment. Also, if you submit a post-dated check for bill payment and it's returned to us by your bank, we must assess you the \$15.00 return check charge.

Save loads of energy on laundry days!

About 80 to 85% of the energy used for washing clothes is used to heat water. Lower your energy costs by washing full loads, using cooler water and cold-water detergents (switching the temperature setting from hot to warm cuts energy use for a load of laundry in half). When drying clothes, clean the lint filter after every load to improve air circulation; remove clothes promptly to minimize wrinkling and the need to use more energy to iron them. Be sure to inspect your dryer vent periodically for blockages.

Spam® Pizza



RECIPE OF THE MONTH

- 3/4 cup diced Maui onion
- 2 teaspoons salad oil or butter
- 6 ounces Spam®
- 1 tablespoon brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce
- 1/4 cup prepared barbecue sauce
- 1 12-inch focaccia bread pizza shell
- 1 1/3 cups quattro fromage (four-cheese blend) shredded cheese
- 1/4 cup cooked spinach leaves

Preheat electric oven to 350°F. Sauté onion in oil or butter until lightly brown; set aside. Cut Spam® into 1/4 x 1/4 x 2-inch strips. In a skillet, heat the brown sugar and soy sauce. Add Spam® strips and cook until strips are browned; set aside. Spread barbecue sauce over pizza shell. Sprinkle with 1 cup of the cheese; top with onions, Spam®, and spinach leaves. Sprinkle with remaining 1/3 cup cheese. Bake directly on center oven rack for 8-10 minutes. Makes 2 servings.