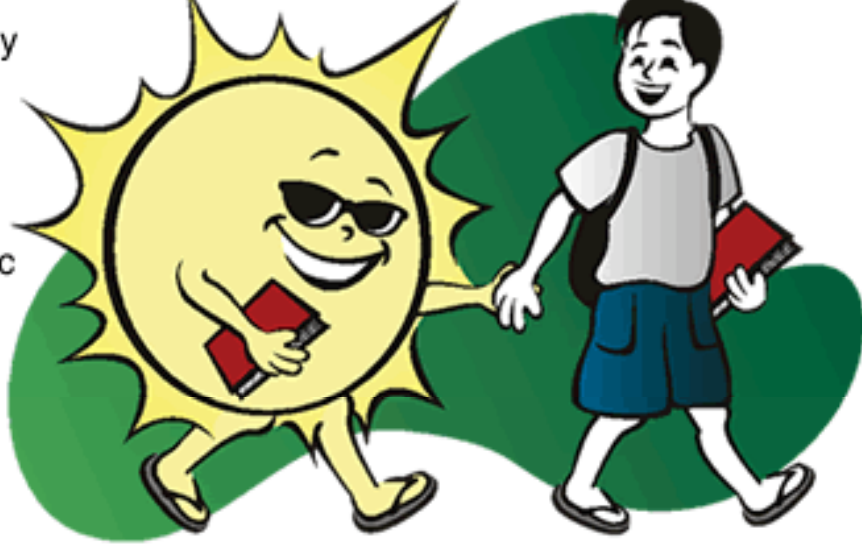




Lanai School to test solar electric panels

Lanai High and Elementary School will help MECO to compare the performance of two types of photovoltaic (PV) solar panels, as part of the *Sun Power for Schools* program.



MECO is installing two 1.25 kilowatt PV systems at the school to test the PV modules, which are reported to perform better than standard modules in cloudy and low-light conditions.

Lanai School, located in the cloudy "rain shadow" of the island's highest peaks, is an ideal test site. Data gathered from this site may prove valuable in choosing PV technology for cloudy locations on Maui and on other Hawaiian Islands.

In addition to benefiting from the small amount of free solar electricity produced by the systems, the school will gain a needed outdoor gathering place for its students. The PV modules, grouped into arrays, will be mounted on a new shade structure that will offer students protection from the sun and rain, while at the same time helping to gather the sun's useful energy.

A sophisticated monitoring system will gather performance data from the PV systems for use by MECO and the school. Teachers like Scott Saiki look forward to using the school's intranet computer system to access data for teaching exercises in the science classes.

[Sun Power for Schools](#) is a voluntary partnership among MECO, its affiliates HECO and HELCO, the Hawaii Department of Education, participating schools, and community members. To become a *Sun Power* partner, fill out and return the enclosed postage-paid reply card.

Also in this issue:

["No-Cost Energy Choices" quiz](#)

[Congratulations Science Bowl winners!](#)

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"No-Cost Energy Choices" quiz

Sometimes saving energy is just a matter of simple choices. Take the quiz below to see how you're doing.

1 Is your water heater set to 120 degrees?

This temperature should be adequate for most households—you may be wasting energy by setting your water heater any higher. (Check dishwasher manual for hot water requirements.) **6 points**

2 Do you always wash full loads of laundry and use cold water?

Use less energy by reducing the number of times your washer runs. Using cold water will save even more. **2 points**

3 Do you use the "sleep" feature on computers, printers, monitors, and other electronics?

This feature will automatically power down many electronic devices to a minimal level after a set period of inactivity and will "wake up" the device upon use. An ENERGY STAR qualified computer uses 70% less electricity than computers without enabled power management features. Are all your sleep features on? If so, give yourself **2 points**.

4 Do you use a solar clothes dryer?

Take advantage of Hawaii's fresh trade winds and sunshine by hanging clothes on a clothesline instead of using a dryer. You'll save energy—and wear and tear on your clothes! **6 points**

5 Do you avoid phantom loads?

Phantom loads appear in electronic items that are not "in use." They can appear in charging devices with "wall cube" plugs, microwaves, VCRs, and other electronics with clock displays. Disconnect electronics by using a power strip between the outlet and the device, or unplug items completely. Consult with your cable and Internet service providers before disconnecting power. **1 point**

6 Are your refrigerator coils clean?

Unless you have a fairly recent model that doesn't require cleaning, you can reduce the load on your refrigerator by removing dirt and pet hair from the coils. Consult the owner's manual and unplug the refrigerator before cleaning coils. **5 points**

Scoring:

22 – 19 points: Excellent!

18 – 15 points: Good

14 – 12 points: Fair

Below 12 points: Need help? Look for more energy-saving tips in upcoming *Consumer Lines*!

Coming soon:

"Low-Cost Energy Choices" quiz

Congratulations Science Bowl winners!

Hawaii's brightest math and science students from 21 schools competed in the 12th Annual Hawaii Science Bowl on January 22, 2005. Taking top honors was the **Maui High School** team, who will represent the State in the National Science Bowl in Washington D.C., April 28 to May 2.



The Maui High School team won the 12th Annual Hawaii Science Bowl and will represent Hawaii at the national event in Washington D.C.

Oahu's **Iolani School** team, last year's winner, came in second place and won an educational trip to visit significant contributors to the advancement of science in Hawaii, such as Mauna Kea Observatories on the Big Island and Maui's High Performance Computing Center. And representing the Big Island, **Hilo High School** placed third.

MECO, HECO, and HELCO joined Aloha Airlines; Bank of Hawaii; Honolulu Community College; The Gas Company; Sheraton Waikiki Hotel; Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism; and the U.S. Department of Energy, Pacific Liaison in sponsoring the Hawaii Science Bowl.

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Curried Rice Pilaf



- 2 cups jasmine rice
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1/2 cup minced onion
- 2 tablespoons curry powder
- 3/4 cup canned coconut milk
- 1 can (14 oz.) chicken stock plus enough water to make 2 cups
- 1/2 teaspoon salt, or more, to taste
- Fresh ground pepper, to taste
- 1/4 cup chopped green onions
- 2 tablespoons chopped peanuts or cashews, for garnish

Rinse and drain rice; cover with water and let sit for about 1 hour. Drain rice thoroughly in a colander and set aside. In a 3-quart saucepan, heat butter and sauté onion until soft and translucent. Add curry powder and cook for 10 to 15 seconds to toast and release fragrant oils. Add drained rice, coconut milk, chicken stock, salt, and pepper. Cover saucepan; bring to boil and reduce heat to lowest setting. Remove lid and continue to simmer for 10 minutes or until rice appears higher than the water surface. Cover saucepan; turn off heat and let sit for another 20 minutes. Do not remove the lid during the last 20 minutes. Just before serving, stir in the green onions and garnish with peanuts. Recipe makes 6 servings.