

## Signs on poles... are *not* a good thing!

Utility poles seem like such convenient places to tack up notices about garage sales, lost pets, or upcoming events, but really, it is not a good idea. In fact, it is against the law.

Not only is it illegal to use utility poles as bulletin boards, there are also penalties for individuals posting signs on the poles and for organizations sponsoring the advertised events or operating the advertised businesses. (Hawaii Revised Statutes 445-114 and 445-121)

The fines for posting signs on poles can be as high as \$500 and/or 30 days in jail. Additionally, once perpetrators receive written notice of the violation, they may be subject to additional fines of up to \$200 per posted item and commu-

nity service time if they don't remove the signs within 72 hours after the date of the advertised event or after written notification of the violation, whichever comes first.

In addition to littering the environment, signs on poles threaten the safety of utility employees. Nails and staples used to attach signs to poles not only make it more difficult for linemen to use their climbing spikes, but they can also puncture insulated safety gloves, thereby exposing linemen to serious injury, even electrocution.

To report someone posting signs on a utility pole or to notify us of a pole that needs to have signs removed from it, call HELCO's Trouble Line at 969-6666.



Posting signs on utility poles is illegal, and tacks used to attach the signs threaten the safety of HELCO linemen, such as Sam Kang pictured here.

### Solar water heating just got **HOTTER!**

Your water heater is one of the largest users of electricity in your home. What can you do to reduce your electric bill and still enjoy the hot water you need? Simple—install a HELCO-approved solar water heating system and save up to \$56 a month, about \$672 a year. But wait there's more!

The deal just got better because solar water heating just got more affordable. A new federal tax credit became effective January 1, 2006 for residential solar water heating systems. It provides a tax credit of 30%, up to \$2,000, on

the purchase of the system.

When combined with the State of Hawaii renewable energy tax credit of 35% and the HELCO instant rebate of \$1,000, the average system cost of \$5,000 drops to only about \$1,800. That's 60% off the original cost!

Financing is available, too. Through the Big Island Solar Roofs program, you may qualify for a 0% or 3% APR solar loan from CU Hawaii Federal Credit Union. Since a solar system will reduce the cost of heating your water for more than 15 years, it's one of the best deals around!

Always consult with your tax advisor, the IRS, or state tax department for details on tax credits. Call 969-0127 for more information.



## How efficient is your refrigerator?

The energy efficiency of refrigerators has improved dramatically over the past three decades. Today a typical refrigerator that defrosts automatically and has a top-mounted freezer uses less than 500 kilowatt-hours (kWh) of electricity per year compared to a typical model sold in 1973, which used over 1,800 kWh per year.

Industry-wide energy efficiency improvements began in 1980; and in 1993, federal efficiency standards were established. A more stringent set of federal standards took effect July 1, 2001; and full-sized refrigerators exceeding these standards by 10% or more became eligible for the federal ENERGY STAR® rating.

We congratulate you if you recently purchased a new refrigerator, especially if you purchased an ENERGY STAR-qualified model. However, we offer a word of advice: Don't use your old refrigerator in addition to your new, energy-efficient model.

Many people move their old refrigerator out to the garage and use it to cool drinks or for extra food storage. But by doing so they are greatly increasing their electricity use. It is far better to purchase an energy-efficient model that fits all of your needs.

Take a look at the accompanying chart to compare the energy use of your refrigerator with others.

Type of refrigerator/freezer unit	Size in cubic feet	Defrost type	Manufactured before 1980: kWh/month	Manufactured after 1980: kWh/month	Manufactured after 2001: kWh/month	ENERGY STAR kWh/month
Top freezer	14-18	Automatic	120-180	65-140	37-47	31-34
Top freezer	19-21	Automatic	135-200	75-160	41-50	32-37
Top freezer	22-25	Automatic			44-47	35-40
Bottom freezer	15-18	Automatic			45-46	38-39
Bottom freezer	19-21	Automatic			47-48	37-40
Bottom freezer	22-25	Automatic	150-180	85-90	48-50	39-42
Side-by-side	19-22	Automatic	140-250	90-180	53-57	45-49
Side-by-side	23-25	Automatic	150-300	100-200	55-62	45-52

## Congratulations Science Bowl winners!

We are very proud of the students who represented our Big Island schools in the **13th Annual Hawaii Science Bowl** on January 28, 2006. They successfully competed against the brightest young minds in math and science from 22 schools across the state.

"Hawaii Science Bowl promotes passion for learning and teaches students to compete, both attributes that help students succeed later in life," said Eileen Yoshinaka, Pacific Liaison for the U.S. Department of Energy and a board member of the Hawaii Science Bowl.

The top five finishers, in order, were *Iolani*, *Hilo High*, *Punahou*, *Waiakea High*, and *Pearl City High* schools. Other schools from the Big Island that participated were *Kealahou*, *St. Joseph*, and *Konawaena*.



Iolani School students (l) compete against Hilo High students (r) in the final round of competition at the 13th Annual Hawaii Science Bowl.

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

### RECIPE OF THE MONTH

## Baked Mustard Corned Beef



3 1/2 pounds corned beef  
 2 bay leaves  
 6 whole black peppercorns  
 Whole cloves  
 1/3 cup brown sugar  
 1/3 cup tomato catsup  
 1 tablespoon prepared mustard  
 2 tablespoons salad oil  
 3 tablespoons vinegar

Cover corned beef with water; add bay leaves and peppercorns, and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer gently for 3 to 4 hours, or until tender. Place in a shallow baking pan and dot with whole cloves. In a saucepan, combine remaining ingredients and heat. Pour over meat and bake at 350°F for 45 minutes, basting once. Recipe makes 6 servings.