

Cook up energy savings this holiday season

The holidays are approaching, a time for entertaining and preparing festive meals and desserts. With a little planning, you can hold down the added electricity use in the kitchen.

Cool tips for the fridge:

- Thaw frozen food in the refrigerator; it will help cool the refrigerator and won't use extra electricity for cooking.
- Limit opening the freezer and refrigerator doors. If you are entertaining, consider setting up coolers for beverages and ice.
- Securely wrap food and cover liquids stored in the refrigerator; the moisture they release makes the refrigerator work harder.
- The Hawaii State Department of Health recommends that leftover cooked foods requiring refrigeration be rapidly cooled to an internal temperature of 45° F or less. To minimize the cooling load on your refrigerator or freezer from hot foods, divide large amounts of leftovers into shallow containers for quicker cooling. You can also place containers of hot food in an ice bath to quickly lower their temperature.*
- Avoid overcrowding items in the refrigerator and freezer to maintain air circulation and improve cooling capability.

Hot tips for the cooktop and oven:

- When using the cooktop, use the smallest-sized pan suitable for the food and match the size of the surface unit to the pan.
- Use a tightly fitting lid to keep the heat within the pan. This allows you to lower the temperature on

the surface unit and shorten the cooking time.

- Use a high temperature setting on the surface unit until food reaches the proper cooking temperature, then lower the heat setting and simmer the food until fully cooked.
- When using the oven, cook as much of your meal in it as possible at the same time.
- Use glass and ceramic pans when possible; you will be able to reduce the oven's temperature by 25° F, and foods will cook just as quickly.
- Unless baking foods like pastries, cakes, cookies, and breads, preheating the oven is not necessary. If you must preheat the oven, time the preheating period carefully; five to eight minutes should be enough time for a standard non-convection oven.
- Use the microwave oven whenever possible to avoid heating the electric oven. Microwave ovens use less than half the electricity and cook foods more quickly.

* For more information on safe food handling, go to: <http://hawaii.gov/health/healthy-lifestyles/foodsafety/handouts.html> or call the Hawaii State Department of Health.



Call 8-1-1 before you dig!

Whether you are a homeowner planning a home improvement project, such as building a deck, constructing a wall, or planting a tree, or you are a professional excavator, you should call **811** to have the utility lines in the excavation area marked—at no cost to you.

Having underground utility lines located and marked is an important safety measure. Knowing where the utility lines are also helps to prevent accidental damage to the lines and disruption of service.

Hawaii state law requires excavators to request information on the location of underground utility lines in the excavation area. Owners of single or two-family dwellings are not required to call 811 prior to digging on their own property, but are encouraged to do so for safety.

As a property owner, if you hire a contractor to perform work that requires excavating,

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confirm that the contractor has contacted the Hawaii One Call Center either by phone at **811** (or **1 866 423-7287**) or online at: www.callbeforeyoudig.org.

Excavators who fail to call the One Call Center may be subject to penalty fines. In addition to calling the One Call Center, excavators still need to obtain proper excavation permits, if applicable, before starting the excavation.

The process is quick and easy; the Hawaii One Call Center can be contacted seven days a week, 24 hours a day. Each utility that has underground lines in the planned excavation area must accurately describe or mark where its lines run within five working days of the call.

For more information, refer to the national Call 811 website: www.call811.com

'Tis the season... for a holiday parade!



Celebrate 25 years of colorful lights, festive floats, and joyous music, and kick off the holiday season with the silver anniversary of Honolulu City Lights and the Electric Light Parade.

Hawaiian Electric's new float features Santa's Beach House, complete with energy-saving solar water heating panels and plenty of "elves" spreading holiday cheer as it parades along King Street from Aala Park to Honolulu Hale. Look for Santa's red suit drying on the clothesline!

The Hawaiian Electric float will take part in the following holiday parades:

December 5—Honolulu City Lights Parade, 6:00 p.m.

December 6—Pearl City Christmas Parade, 4:00 p.m.

December 12—West Oahu (Kapolei) Holiday Electric Light Parade, 6:00 p.m.

Log on to www.honolulucitylights.org for more information.

Hot tips for water heater use

In Hawaii conventional electric water heaters generally account for the largest portion of the monthly electricity use in homes without air conditioning. These water heaters consume an estimated 260 kilowatt-hours (kWh) per month for a family of four, costing roughly \$60 on Oahu. Energy consumption varies depending on family size and hot water use.

Following are some tips for using electric water heaters:

- ◆ Repair hot-water leaks in plumbing and faucets. A leaking hot-water faucet not only wastes water, but up to 400 kWh per year. A broken hot-water pipe can cause extreme increases in electricity and water costs.
- ◆ Wrap older water heaters. Installing an insulation

blanket around water heaters purchased before 2004 helps to conserve energy. To further reduce heat loss, insulate both water pipes leading out from the hot-water tank.

- ◆ Install water-saving showerheads or flow restrictors in older faucets. Flow restrictors reduce water flow by one to three gallons per minute.
- ◆ Set the water heater thermostat between 120° F and 125° F. Be sure to turn off the electricity to the water heater at the circuit breaker panel before adjusting the temperature.
- ◆ Take short, five-minute showers instead of tub baths.
- ◆ While shaving or washing dishes by hand, close the drain and fill the basin or sink rather than letting water run.

Go Bots!

Congratulations to Hawaii's future engineers who are participating in the *FIRST* LEGO League and VEX Robotics competitions this year. These team challenges involve ingenuity, skill, and sportsmanship.

For nearly a decade, Hawaiian Electric Company has been a proud supporter of robotics through financial contributions and volunteer mentors. Participation in these competitions has encouraged middle and high school students to pursue the fields of robotics and engineering.

Two championship competitions will be held next month:

December 3–5 Pan Pacific VEX Robotics Championship
Hawaii Convention Center

December 19 *FIRST* LEGO League State Championship
Neal Blaisdell Center

Dates are subject to change. For more information, go to: www.robotics.hawaii.gov

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Guava-Glazed Sweet Potatoes

6 sweet potatoes, cooked and pared
1 cup guava jelly
2 tablespoons butter or margarine



Grease a 10-inch baking dish. Cut sweet potatoes into lengthwise halves and arrange in prepared dish in a single layer. In a saucepan, heat jelly and butter, stirring constantly, until butter melts. Dribble half of guava syrup over potatoes; bake at 350°F for 15 minutes. Turn potatoes; baste with remaining syrup. Bake 15 more minutes. Recipe makes 6 servings.

