



Hawaiian Electric
Maui Electric
Hawai'i Electric Light

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Hawaiian Electric creates new Customer Energy department *Streamlined organization aims to encourage participation in programs*

HONOLULU, Nov. 8, 2019 – To more effectively serve customers with rooftop solar and other devices that can interact with the electric grid, the Hawaiian Electric Companies are creating a single Customer Energy Resources (CER) department with personnel based on Hawai'i, Maui and O'ahu.

“As the new name suggests, we are putting the customer first by providing a unified way for customers to understand and take advantage of more options to ‘help your wallet and help the grid’ as we move to 100 percent clean energy,” said Kaiulani Shinsato, CER co-director for programs and policy. She and Yoh Kawanami, co-director for operations, will oversee the new department.

Previously, this work was part of two departments known as Distributed Energy Resources and Demand Response. The new name as well as a more streamlined organization that serves customers on five islands will bring more focus to the effort to increase participation by customers and contractors in private rooftop solar, storage and grid services, said Shelee Kimura, senior vice president for customer service.

“To reach our clean energy goals, we will need to at least double the 80,000 customer-sited rooftop solar systems in the next 25 years and see much higher customer participation directly or through aggregators in programs that provide incentives or different pricing to encourage customers to reduce or shift their electricity use to support the grid,” Kimura said.

With customers now able to add rooftop solar, energy storage, demand response devices like grid-interactive water heaters, and electric vehicles that store energy on their side of the meter, it made sense to unify and simplify the customers' interaction with the companies, she said.

Early next year, the companies will publish a Customer Energy Resources Strategy that will lay out the policies and programs anticipated to meet customer needs in the near future. The companies are consulting with stakeholders, including solar developers and their trade associations, outside renewable energy experts, regulators and others, in developing the strategy.

###

FOLLOW US FOR THE LATEST:

