Hawaiian Electric

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Hawaiian Electric develops plan to ramp up rooftop solar, other customer resources to meet 100% clean energy goals

Public comment sought on Customer Energy Resources strategy

HONOLULU, May 10, 2021 – Hawaiian Electric is seeking public input on its strategy to increase rooftop solar and similar customer energy resources to the scale needed to reach the state's clean energy benchmarks. The company has filed "Customer Energy Resources for Hawai'i; A Customer-First CER Strategy for a 100% Clean Energy Future" with the Public Utilities Commission.

The document is available for review at Customer_Energy_Resources_for_Hawaii. Comments may be sent to connect@hawaiianelectric.com with "CER Strategy" in the subject line.

"Hawaiian Electric needs to maximize customer-sited resources like rooftop solar and batteries, electric vehicles and emerging electricity management technologies to decarbonize our energy systems by 2045," said Shelee Kimura, Hawaiian Electric senior vice president for customer service and public affairs.

"We simply do not have enough open land to sustainably balance renewable energy with other vital needs such as housing and local food supply. It's critical that all customers participate in this energy transformation in a fair and equitable way, even if they're unable to install rooftop solar," she said.

Release of the CER strategy follows a year of consultation and cooperation with the rooftop solar industry that has further smoothed and speeded the interconnection process during the COVID-19 pandemic and removed barriers to customers quickly getting rooftop solar and energy storage benefits. As a result of this continuing process, in 2020 nearly 6,000 new rooftop solar systems were installed across Hawaiian Electric's service territory, a 55% increase from 2019.

As an example, Hawaiian Electric instituted Quick Connect so customers on O'ahu, Maui and Hawai'i islands installing most new systems on virtually all circuits do not need standard approvals before activating their systems and saving money. An approval process that typically takes weeks can now begin after the system is built and turned on, substantially reducing the wait for new solar customers to see bill savings.

The CER strategy details the "Equity Principle," that expansion of CERs must benefit all customers, including with moderate or fixed incomes, and must fairly allocate utility costs among customers based on benefits they receive or provide the grid.

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Customer energy resources are technologies and devices on the customer-side of the meter that can alter energy use. The Strategy envisions a modern grid with about half of all customers' electricity needs coming from the "edge of the grid" (that is, from customers) not the "center of the grid" (large power plants that push power out to customers.)

Customers will be encouraged to participate and be compensated through a variety of mechanisms including:

- Pricing where they may use electricity rate options to help manage their bills.
- Programs that are streamlined and simplified versions of today's choices for rooftop solar, batteries and other devices.
- Voluntary engagement with independent companies, called aggregators, that link customer-based systems and pay customers to provide services that stabilize the grid in normal and emergency situations.

The strategy notes that energy efficiency and conservation are essential to customer involvement. Hawaiian Electric continues to collaborate with Hawai'i Energy, the Public Utilities Commission's independent entity that administers the state's energy efficiency programs. Energy efficiency is incorporated in resource planning, including the state's Energy Efficiency Portfolio Standard which targets a continuing 30% electricity sales reduction by 2030.

And the strategy points out that the successful shift to a two-way flow of *electricity* + *data* + *communication* depends on linked, ongoing Hawaiian Electric initiatives. These include, Advanced Rate Design, Grid Modernization and Integrated Grid Planning.

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