



**Hawaiian
Electric**

NEWS RELEASE

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Helicopter inspections reveal overgrowth of albizia trees cause of East Honolulu power outages

HONOLULU, May 23, 2024 – Helicopter inspections by Hawaiian Electric revealed critical transmission line corridors that run along the base of the Koʻolau mountains have been choked by extensive overgrowth of albizia trees, leading to recent power outages that affected Hawaiʻi Kai and portions of East Honolulu.

East Honolulu relies on power lines that bring electricity to the area from Windward Oʻahu. The lines run along the base of the Koolau range near Waimanalo and cross over into East Honolulu. Last weekend, portions of Hawaiʻi Kai lost power when an albizia tree fell across one of these lines. Follow up aerial inspections showed albizia trees encroaching upon long sections of the lines near the base of the Koʻolau mountains.

“We have schedules we follow to cut back vegetation from critical areas but invasive albizia are especially challenging because they grow so quickly and have branches that can break off easily, especially in heavy rains,” said Jim Alberts, senior vice president and chief operations officer of Hawaiian Electric. “We’re developing action plans to clear this area to ensure reliable service to the area.”

Hawaiian Electric spends about \$12 million a year on vegetation management on Oʻahu.

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