



**Hawaiian  
Electric**

## NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Hawaiian Electric deploys high resolution video cameras with artificial intelligence (AI) for early detection of wildfires** *Strategically placed cameras will monitor 24/7 for ignitions*

**HONOLULU, July 16, 2024** – Hawaiian Electric has begun deploying a network of high-resolution video cameras using artificial intelligence (AI) technology to provide enhanced situational awareness and early detection of ignitions in elevated fire risk areas near company infrastructure. The public will also have access to the live feeds from any of the cameras.

Hawaiian Electric recently installed the first camera station in Lahaina and has plans to deploy a total of 78 stations in elevated fire risk areas on the five islands served by the company, with each location having two cameras to provide a full 360-degree view. The camera feeds will be monitored 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The \$14 million project is the latest step in Hawaiian Electric's ongoing effort to reduce the risk of wildfires associated with company equipment.

"We are continuing to take action to address the growing risks from wildfires across our service territory using a variety of technologies and methods," said Jim Alberts, Hawaiian Electric senior vice president and chief operations officer. "Installing publicly viewable AI-assisted video cameras in elevated fire risk areas will enable the company, fire agencies, and emergency operations centers the ability to identify potential wildfires early and respond quickly."

Hawaiian Electric signed a five-year contract with California-based ALERTWest. ALERTWest will install and maintain the camera stations as well as provide around-the-clock monitoring for potential ignitions by experienced wildfire safety professionals. Approximately 50% of the project costs will be covered by federal funds allocated under the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) estimated at \$90 million in grant funding covering various costs related to Hawaiian Electric's resiliency and wildfire mitigation work. Hawaiian Electric also will be able to achieve cost savings by leveraging its existing telecom network to provide communications support for the project.

ALERTWest's software platform, which is widely used in fire-prone areas through the Western U.S., is assisted by AI to detect smoke and other early indications of fire in real-time. It was developed by ALERTWest in collaboration with UC SanDiego's ALERTCalifornia team, California utilities, and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE). ALERTWest also recently partnered with the University of Oregon and the University of Nevada, Reno, creating the largest publicly available, interoperable, AI wildfire detection system in the United States. The system is assisted by AI to detect smoke and other early indications of fire in real time, day and night. This allows first responders and emergency personnel to cross state

boundaries in mutual aid situations and have access to the tool when needed. The AI Solution was recognized as one of TIME magazine's best inventions of 2023.

The software platform's pan, tilt, zoom cameras constantly scan their surroundings, completing one 360-degree sweep every two minutes. Utilizing AI, the system detects changes from previous images and highlights them with a red rectangular box on the screen. This, coupled with 24/7 human verification, helps eliminate false alerts caused by mist or dust. If a suspected ignition is detected, the ALERTWest Operations Center staff reviews the camera imagery to ensure there is sufficient visual evidence before notifying Hawaiian Electric and emergency response agencies.

The public will be able to access the live feeds from any of the cameras on the ALERTWest website at [www.alertwest.org](http://www.alertwest.org). Half of the video camera stations are expected to be operational by September 2024, with the remainder to be installed in the first half of 2025.

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